



Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation



2016 Annual Report

**Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology & Geo-Hazards,
Environment, Energy and Disaster Management**



SECTION ONE – OVERVIEW

Review of 2016 by the Director

The vision of the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation (DEPC) is ‘Leading Vanuatu to a Clean, Resilient and Sustainable Environment’.

As we work towards seeing the reality of this vision statement, the past year was a very busy and exciting one for the DEPC team in which many of our plans for the year were successfully implemented and achieved.

This Annual Report narrates the principal activities and achievements reached by the DEPC team in 2016.

The highlights achieved by the DEPC in 2016 were: (i) the new organisational structure approved by Public Service Commission (PSC) in February 2016. The implementation of the new structure started in 2016 with recruitment of three new DEPC officers. Recruitment will continue in 2017; (ii) the endorsement of the National Environment Policy and Implementation Plan (NEPIP) by the Council of Ministers (COM) in September 2016 as a 14 year plan from 2016-2030. This is a milestone for the DEPC – to have a policy to guide the department into the future; (iii) the environment become one of the principal pillars in national plans, i.e. environment was incorporated as one of the main pillars of the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP). DEPC’s staff worked really hard with other sectors to ensure environmental protection and management provisions were included in this national plan; and (iv) the first national clean-up day was held in September 2016.

These great achievements would not have been realized without the support of the Divisions. The DEPC has four main divisions: (i) Biodiversity and Conservation, (ii) Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment, (iii) Provincial Outreach, (iv) Environmental Protection and (v) Finance, Administration and Support Services.

The Biodiversity and Conservation Division is responsible for implementing the provisions of Part 4 of the *Environmental Protection and Conservation Act* [CAP 283] (the EPC Act) which is on biodiversity and protected areas. Under the leadership of one officer, the Division has worked extremely hard with established conservation management committees to ensure their management plans for conservation areas are implemented, assisting them with reporting obligations. The Division has also conducted awareness with communities on the importance of protecting our natural resources. The officer working in this Division is not only performing the duties as mandated under the EPC Act but is also supervising a number of biodiversity related projects that are hosted by the DEPC.

The Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment Division is responsible for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), mandated in Part 3 of the EPC Act. This is the Division that ensures developments that have the potential to significantly cause adverse impacts on the national environment are executed in a sustainable manner. Such developments are regulated through a permitting system where conditions of

permits are imposed on developments to ensure a sustainable environment. In 2016, the DEPC has issued over 80 Environmental Permits for development projects, meaning there were over 80 applications received by this division to review, conduct field assessments, and process. There were also several EIA reports submitted for review and decision. The Division also conducted reviews of applications for big infrastructure projects. The Division also worked with the ADB TA on the project of enhancing and strengthening domestic environmental safeguards, including working on the review of the EPC Act, mainly the EIA provisions. Most of the revenue collected by the DEPC came from the application fees, submission fees, consultant fees, fines and penalties associated with EIA.

Another important Division is the Provincial Outreach Division that is responsible for providing awareness and information to the wider population on the importance of protecting and conserving our natural environment. This is a newly established Division under the revised organizational structure. The division will work closely with the 6 provinces communicating the work of the DEPC. The DEPC has an extension officer in Santo established to carry the functions and duties of the DEPC mainly in Sanma Province. Other extension offices will be set up in other provinces in the future

The Environmental Protection Division is another very hard working Division of the DEPC. It is responsible for administering the *Waste Management Act No. 24 of 2014* and the *Pollution (Control) Act No. 10 of 2013*. The Division conducted workshops with its stakeholders, including provincial planners, to finalize the National Waste Management Strategy (NWMS). It also assisted Penama and Malampa Province in developing their waste management plans. The Division also worked with the ADB TA on developing waste management and pollution control regulations. These tasks are expected to continue in 2017. One of the main achievements was the first National Clean-up event held in September 2016. This was successfully conducted with the assistance and support provided by its stakeholders. A lot of speeches, waste related activities and displays happened at that time. This will become an annual event to demonstrate that we are all responsible to keep our country clean. There were also initial efforts made with the Vanuatu JICA Office to commence the J-PRISM Phase II project. Actual work will begin in 2017.

The fifth Division of the DEPC is Finance, Administration and Support Services. This Division has worked extremely hard to provide support in ensuring the services needed from the DEPC through the Divisions are effectively and efficiently delivered to the public. The Division has worked closely with the CSU and the PSC on the restructuring of the organization. In 2016 the DEPC welcomed three newly appointed officers. This was successfully accomplished when the PSC approved DEPC's structure. Another is the approval of the NEPIP by the COM in September 2016. This would not be done without the help of this division including incorporating environment into the NSDP. In 2016, the DEPC budget increased from 1.8m to 6.8m vatu. The increase of 5m vatu was kindly contributed by the Vanuatu Meteorological and Geo-Hazards Department (VMGD) and I would like to thank VMGD for this huge support. A brand new 4WD vehicle was purchased to assist the work of the Divisions mainly with field work.

Despite the above achievements, the DEPC has faced a number of challenges in 2016. The DEPC's Compliance Officer resigned in January 2016 and the DEPC has been working without one in 2016. The

DEPC is administering a number of Acts and international obligations and the compliance and enforcement work needs to be resourced as soon as possible.

The DEPC office is located away from the Ministry of Climate Change and this is often difficult. The resignation of the Director in September 2016 after the appointment made in June 2016 also contributed to the capacity issues the DEPC is continuing to face.

In conclusion, regardless of the challenges, the DEPC continues to aim high and continue to lead Vanuatu to a clean, resilient and sustainable environment.

All the credits and acknowledgements go to the DEPC staff for their great contributions in this busy year. I would also like to thank and acknowledge the huge contributions of the AVID volunteers who have assisted the DEPC in 2016.

I would also like to extend my acknowledgment to the Director General's office and the MoCC for the great support and efforts given in 2016. Without that continuous help, we would not have achieved our plans for the year.

I would also like to thank the other Government Ministries and Departments for the cooperation and collaboration efforts put in over the past year.

Not forgetting the donor agencies for providing funding and technical assistance towards the work of the DEPC.

The DEPC is looking forward for another challenging yet exciting year in 2017 and to continuing the working together of the DEPC staff, the MoCC, other Government Ministries and Departments. There are many more plans and activities yet to achieve and I am sure that the DEPC will expand and achieve more in 2017.

Reedly Tari

Acting Director, Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation.

About the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation

In 2002, the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu passed the *Environmental Management and Conservation Act No. 12 of 2002*, now the *Environmental Protection and Conservation Act [CAP 283]* (the EPC Act). The EPC Act formally established DEPC in legislation and outlines its role in the development, coordination and implementation of the Government's environmental policies and programs.

While DEPC was originally established as the Environment Unit in 1986, it was upgraded to departmental status in 2010 and is now a part of the Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology & Geo-hazards, Environment, Energy and Disaster Management (MCCA).

On 19 February 2016, a new structure for DEPC was approved by the Public Service Commission (PSC) and DEPC staff worked under five divisions: Biodiversity and Conservation; Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment; Provincial Outreach; Environmental Protection; and Finance, Administration and Support Services. Together, the work carried out by each of these divisions reflected the vision, mission and responsibilities of DEPC.

1. Vision

The vision of DEPC is: *'Leading Vanuatu to a clean, resilient and sustainable environment'*.¹

2. Mission

The DEPC works to achieve its vision by leading by example: *'Think Environment First: Show People!'*.²

3. Principles

The DEPC operates under two sets of guiding principles: One that relates to the type of work done by DEPC and one that governs the way staff work together.

In discharging its functions as a department, DEPC's guiding principles are to:

- Promote clean development in Vanuatu
- Build resilient communities who will be able to adapt to climate change
- Encourage and support sustainable resource management and conservation
- Promote a green economy
- Work towards sustainable development
- Explore the development of a carbon scheme for Vanuatu.³

¹ DEPC Strategic Plan 2014 to 2024.

² DEPC Strategic Plan 2014 to 2024.

³ DEPC Strategic Plan 2014 to 2024.

In operating as a department, DEPC's guiding principles are to value:⁴



4. Objectives

The DEPC aims to:

1. Develop an appropriate legislative framework to lead and guide clean, resilient and sustainable development
2. Strengthen compliance and enforcement of environmental legislation
3. Improve coordination between stakeholders (government sector, private sector, donor partners and non-government organisations (NGOs))
4. Develop and implement the National Environment Policy and Implementation Plan 2016 – 2030 (NEPIP)
5. Improve the resourcing, revenue collection and working environment for DEPC.⁵

5. Areas of Responsibility

The DEPC is the government agency responsible for matters relating to the environment. This includes developing, coordinating and implementing the government's environmental policies and programs.⁶ It also includes representing Vanuatu on the international stage as the focal point for multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

6. Programs, Functions and Sectors Served

The DEPC's programs and functions are reflected in the operational divisions of DEPC: Biodiversity and Conservation; Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment; Provincial Outreach; Environmental Protection; and Finance, Administration and Support Services. As the protection, management and

⁴ DEPC Strategic Plan 2014 to 2024.

⁵ DEPC Corporate Plan Matrix, DEPC Corporate Plan 2015 – 2018.

⁶ *Environmental Protection and Conservation Act* [CAP 283] s 4.

conservation of the environment is a cross cutting issue, DEPC's work ultimately serves all sectors of Vanuatu. To reflect this, DEPC works in partnership with other government agencies, donor partners and NGOs to implement a variety of programs and projects. The key programs and projects DEPC worked on in 2016 are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Key DEPC programs and projects 2016

<p style="text-align: center;">Biodiversity and Conservation</p> <p>Global Environment Facility (GEF)/United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) Review Project</p> <p>GIZ/International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Management in Pacific Island Countries (MACBIO) Project – including the development of an Oceans Policy for Vanuatu (in conjunction with the Department of Foreign Affairs)</p> <p>Community Based Management of Threats to Wetland Biodiversity at Lake Letas, Gaua Island, Vanuatu (Lake Letas Project), including accession to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (the Ramsar Convention)</p> <p>GEF/Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Pacific Alliance for Sustainability (GEF-PAS) Forestry and Protected Area Management (FPAM) Project – a joint project between DEPC and the Department of Forests</p> <p>United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/GEF-PAS Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Project</p> <p>UNDP/GEF Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA)</p> <p>Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) Programme</p> <p>Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) Program</p> <p>UNDP/The Pacific Community (SPC) International Waters Ridge to Reef (R2R) Project – focusing on Tagabe River management</p> <p>GEF/UNDP Mainstreaming Global Environmental Priorities into National Policies and Programs Project</p> <p>GEF 5/FAO Integrated Sustainable Land and Coastal Management (ISLCM) Project</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment</p> <p>Asian Development Bank Technical Assistance 9073-VAN Project: Strengthening for Environmental Safeguards in Vanuatu (ABD-TA 9073)</p> <p>Port Vila Urban Development Project (PVUDP)</p> <p>Port Vila Lapetasi International Multi-Purpose Wharf Development Project</p> <p>Vanuatu Inter-Island Shipping Support Project (VISSP)</p> <p>Roads for Development Project</p> <p>Vanuatu Infrastructure Reconstruction and Improvement Project (VIRIP)</p> <p>Cyclone Pam Road Reconstruction Project (CPRRP)</p> <p>Vanuatu Coastal Adaptation Project (VCAP)</p> <p>Vanuatu Aviation Investment Program (VAIP)</p> <p>Vanuatu Tourism Infrastructure Project (VTIP)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Environmental Protection</p> <p>Pacific Hazardous Waste Management (PacWaste) Project</p>

GEF-PAS Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Release Reduction Project

Agence Francaise de Developpement (AFD) Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) Regional Solid Waste Management Initiative

The Project for Promotion of Regional Initiative Solid Waste Management in Pacific Island Countries (J-PRISM) – a Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Japanese Technical Cooperation Project

Pacific Ocean Pollution Prevention (PACPOL) Programme

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Initiative (the 3Rs)

Port Vila Urban Development Project (PVUDP)

ABD-TA 9073

VIRIP

In addition to these programs and projects DEPC has a number of core functions.

The main functions of DEPC are to:

- Develop, coordinate and implement the Government's environmental policies and programs
- Undertake environmental research, assessment and monitoring
- Issue permits for bioprospecting under the EPC Act and in accordance with Vanuatu's obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilisation (the Nagoya Protocol)
- Support communities to formally protect areas of biodiversity significance through registration as Community Conservation Areas (CCAs)
- Issue permits under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) through the administration of the *International Trade (Flora and Fauna) Act* [CAP 210] and associated regulations (CITES Act and Regulations)
- Administer the *Waste Management Act No. 24 of 2014* (Waste Management Act) and the *Pollution (Control) Act No. 10 of 2013* (Pollution Control Act) and therefore encourage effective waste services and operations and control the discharge and emission of pollution
- Control ozone depleting substances (ODS) in Vanuatu in accordance with the *Ozone Layer Protection Act No. 27 of 2010* (the OLP Act) and Vanuatu's obligations under the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (the Montreal Protocol)
- Administer the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process in accordance with the EPC Act and the *Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations* (EIA Regulations)
- Act as the national focal point for a number of MEAs and ensure that development and activities occurring in Vanuatu are in line with the Government's commitments under these international and regional instruments.

While focusing on DEPC's functions that are directly linked to environmental protection, management and conservation, DEPC is also responsible for complying with other government rules and policies such as the requirements of the *Public Service Act* [CAP 246] and the *Public Finance and Economic Management Act* [CAP 244]. The Finance, Administration and Support Services Division plays an important role in performing this function.

7. Structure and Staff

Following the approval of a new structure by the Public Service Commission (PSC) on 19 February 2016 (see Appendix), DEPC undertook a number of recruitment processes. This resulted in the appointment of a new Director, EIA Officer and Senior Officer (Chemical and Ozone). Recruitment processes for a Senior Officer (Conservation), Pollution Control Officer, and a Compliance Officer also commenced in 2016. While a new Director was appointed in June 2016, the position was subsequently vacated and acting arrangements were put in place from 20 October 2016.

In addition to the recruitment of new staff five permanent officers received appointment letters from PSC on their acting positions for the six months from April 15 to October 15 2016:

- Mr. Trinison Tari - Principal Officer: Provincial Outreach
- Mrs. Donna Kalfatak Moli - Principal Officer: Biodiversity and Conservation Officer
- Mr. Reedly Tari - Principal Officer: Environmental Impact Assessment
- Mr. Christophe Bulerop - Driver and Messenger
- Ms. Primrose Malosu - Finance and Admin Officer

The process of transferring the permanent staff to the positions in the new structure is being facilitated by the Corporate Services Division of MCCA.

Table 2: DEPC staff 2016
*Permanent DEPC staff

Division	Staff	Position
Director Finance, Administration and Support Services	*Reedly Tari	Acting Director (commenced 20 October 2016)
	<i>Jason Raubani</i>	<i>Director (5 July – 19 September 2016)</i>
	<i>Trinison Tari</i>	<i>Acting Director (1 January – 4 July 2016)</i>
	<i>Touasi Tiwok</i>	<i>Principal Environment Officer On study leave in 2016</i>
	<i>Wycliff Junior Bakeo</i>	<i>Compliance Officer (1 – 17 January 2016) VACANT from 18 January 2016</i>
	*Primrose Malosu	Finance and Administration Officer
	*Christophe Bulerop	Driver and Messenger
	Elaine Moli	Volunteer (Student at the University of the South Pacific (USP)) (part time)
Biodiversity and Conservation	*Donna Kalfatak	Principal Officer (Biodiversity and Conservation)
	Mark Kalotap	NBSAP Review Project Coordinator
	Vatumaraga Molisa	IUCN Project Liaison Officer (MACBIO,

Division	Staff	Position
		BIOPAMA and CEPF projects)
	Molu Bulu	UNDP/GEF-PAS IAS Project Coordinator
	Alick Berry	R2R Project Manager
	Josephine Rambay	Volunteer (Student at USP) (part time)
	Mimosa Bethel	Volunteer (Student at USP) (part time)
Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment	*Reedly Tari	Principal Officer (Environmental Impact Assessment)
	*Norma Tor	EIA Officer (commenced 22 November 2016)
	Kate McPherson	Environment Legal Support Officer (Australian Volunteers for International Development (AVID) program) ⁷
	Iain Haggarty	ABD-TA 9073 Team Leader Environmental Specialist (part-time)
	Norman Sheridan	ADB-TA 9073 Environment Legal Specialist (part-time)
Provincial Outreach	*Trinison Tari	Principal Officer (Provincial Outreach, Information and Communication)
	*Anaclet Philip	Sanma Environment Extension Officer
Environmental Protection	*Carol Rovo	Principal Officer (Waste Management and Pollution Control)
	*Roselyn Bue	Senior Officer (Chemical and Ozone) (commenced 12 December 2016)
	Amy Yang	Waste Management Support Officer (AVID program)

Biodiversity and Conservation Division

In 2016 the Biodiversity and Conservation Division consisted of one permanent staff member, supported by volunteers and a number of project officers aligned with specific projects.

The division is responsible for implementing activities relating to biodiversity conservation through terrestrial, marine and coastal conservation/protected areas; biodiversity assessments and research; wetlands management; invasive species management, control and eradication; and the implementation of international and regional natural resource, ecosystem management/protection and biodiversity related conventions.

⁷ In August 2016 the position of the AVID was changed to the Environmental Legislation Support Officer.

In particular, the Biodiversity and Conservation Division administers part 4, division 2 of the EPC Act which provides for the legal registration of CCAs. Registration is voluntary and the EPC Act provides for national legal support to manage CCAs where communities see that there is a need to. From the past years until today CCAs have been managed through traditional resource management systems and many are working effectively. To date five CCAs have been legally registered. The division also processes research applications in accordance with part 4, division 1 of the EPC Act .

In fulfilling its functions, the Biodiversity and Conservation Division deals directly with a number of MEAs. In addition to the MEAs listed below, the division works closely with the Fisheries, Forestry and Biosecurity departments to support the implementation of other MEAs.

Table 3: Current MEAs relating to biodiversity and conservation
 ✓= Vanuatu has ratified, accepted, approved or acceded to the MEA.

MEA	Type of MEA		Current status in Vanuatu
	International	Regional	
Convention on Biological Diversity	x		✓
Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilisation to the Convention on Biological Diversity	x		✓
Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety	x		
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)	x		✓
Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (the Ramsar Convention)	x		
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals	x		Vanuatu has signed a number of memoranda of understanding under the CMS but is not a party to the Convention ⁸
Pacific Islands Regional Conservation Strategy		x	✓

⁸ Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Sharks; Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs (*Dugong dugon*) And Their Habitats Throughout Their Range; Memorandum of Understanding for the Conservation of Cetaceans And Their Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region.

Environmental Planning and Assessment Division

For the majority of 2016 the Environmental Planning and Assessment Division consisted of one permanent staff member and two part-time technical advisors funded through ADB-TA 9073. A second permanent staff member commenced work with the division in November 2016. The division and the DEPC more generally were also supported by an Environment Legal Support Officer through the AVID program.⁹

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Division is one of the technical divisions of DEPC and was established to implement the provisions of part 3 of the EPC Act. Part 3 of the EPC Act covers Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Under section 11 of the EPC Act it is a requirement that all projects, proposals or development activities that: (a) impact or are likely to impact on the environment of Vanuatu; and (b) require any license, permit or approval under any law are subject to EIA.

EIA refers to the process of assessing the potential environmental, social and custom impacts of a development project. The process involves submitting an Environmental Permit application to DEPC for assessment prior to work commencing on the development project.

The main responsibilities of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Division are to:

1. Facilitate the EIA process (from the application stage to the granting or refusal of Environmental Permits)
2. Screen and review Environmental Permit applications, including undertaking Preliminary Environmental Assessments (PEA) and preparing PEA reports on Environmental Permit applications
3. Conduct site visits on development project sites
4. Develop Terms of Reference for EIA reports
5. Organise the review of EIA reports by an EIA Review Committee (the Committee)
6. Prepare Committee meeting minutes and reports of the Committee
7. Develop Environmental Permit conditions
8. Undertake monitoring and compliance on development projects during and after construction.

By administering the EIA process in accordance with the EPC Act and the EIA Regulations, the division seeks to promote better management and protection of the natural environment – effective planning, implementation and enforcement of the DEPC’s environmental frameworks will help to ensure clean, resilient and sustainable use of the natural resources for the citizens of Vanuatu.

Provincial Outreach Division

The approval of DEPC’s new structure in February 2016 resulted in the establishment of the Provincial Outreach Division. This new division is the primary link between DEPC and the provinces and is responsible for coordinating information and communicating/marketing the work of DEPC. In doing so,

⁹ In August 2016 the position of the AVID was changed to the Environmental Legislation Support Officer.

the work of this division covers activities across all divisions of DEPC. In 2016 the Provincial Outreach Division consisted of two permanent staff members.

The main functions of the Provincial Outreach Division are to:

- Raise awareness about DEPC, communicating and marketing the work of DEPC
- Raise awareness about the role communities and sector stakeholders play in meeting legislative, policy and MEA compliance as well as their role in environmental management more generally
- Act as a liaison or focal point for DEPC’s provincial activities
- Provide support for provincial projects and promote extension services.

As the division expands to include officers in more provinces it will also provide for the decentralisation of DEPC’s activities.

Environmental Protection Division

For the majority of 2016 the Environmental Protection Division consisted of one permanent staff member and a Waste Management Support Officer through the AVID program. As a result of maternity leave, from late October till mid-December, the division did not have any permanent staff. An additional permanent officer commenced work on 12 December 2016.

The Environmental Protection Division is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the OLP Act, the Pollution Control Act, the Waste Management Act and the National Waste Management Strategy and Action Plans for 2011-2016 (NWMS).

The vision of the division is ‘Safe Vanuatu. Protect our Environment’. In relation to waste management and pollution control, the mission of the division is for an environmentally sustainable Vanuatu in which all types of wastes are collected, reused, recycled and treated by environmental sound technologies suited to local conditions; waste going to landfill is minimised; and pollution to the receiving environment is within acceptable standards.

In fulfilling its functions, the Environmental Protection Division deals directly with a number of MEAs.

Table 4: Current MEAs relating to environmental protection
 ✓= Vanuatu has ratified, accepted, approved or acceded to the MEA.

MEA	Type of MEA		Current status in Vanuatu
	International	Regional	
Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (Stockholm Convention)	x		✓
Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of	x		

MEA	Type of MEA		Current status in Vanuatu
	International	Regional	
Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal (Basel Convention)			
Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade (Rotterdam Convention)	x		
International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973 as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto (MARPOL Convention): Annex V (Waste Disposal)	x		✓
MARPOL Convention: Annex VI (Air Pollution)	x		✓
Waigani Convention		x	✓
Convention for the Protection of Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific (Noumea Convention)		x	✓
Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer	x		✓
Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer	x		✓
Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (London 1990)	x		✓
Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (Copenhagen 1992)	x		✓
Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (Montreal 1997)	x		✓
Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (Beijing 1999)	x		✓
Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (Kigali 2016)	x		
Minamata Convention on Mercury	x		

Finance, Administration and Support Services Division

In 2016, the Finance, Administration and Support Services Division primarily consisted of two permanent staff members, a Finance and Administration Officer and a Driver and Messenger.

The Finance, Administration and Support Services Division plays an important role within DEPC by:

- Providing administrative support for all departmental activities
- Managing and controlling DEPC's re-current budget
- Raising local purchase orders (LPOs) for departmental and project activities
- Providing financial and administrative assistance to projects housed within DEPC
- Managing the assets of DEPC
- Collecting revenue under the EPC Act, OLP Act and the CITES Act and Regulations.

In addition to their normal administrative support activities, the staff of the Finance, Administration and Support Services Division are utilised by other officers to assist in their areas of work. These opportunities have been seen as a capacity building initiative.

Compliance

The approval of DEPC's new structure in February 2016 resulted in the position of Compliance Officer reporting directly to the Director. The Compliance Officer is responsible for ensuring compliance with the legislation administered across DEPC. In 2016 the Compliance Officer position was vacant from 18 January 2016. The position was advertised three times but a suitable candidate was not found.

8. Funding Basis

In late 2015, following several executive management meetings within MCCA, 5 million vatu from VMGD's operational budget was transferred into DEPC's operational budget and entered into the Vanuatu Budget Management System for use in 2016.

Including these funds, the DEPC budget for 2016 was 35,173,849vt of which 23,329,394vt was used on payroll/personnel expenses and 6,844,455vt on operations. 5,000,000vt consisted of money under a New Program Policy (NPP) approved for DEPC to meet the salary costs for new positions under the approved structure.

In addition to its recurrent budget, in 2016 the DEPC managed seven projects with external funding:

1. PoWPA (UNDP)
2. GEF-PAS IAS Project (UNDP and SPREP)
3. MACBIO, BIOPAMA and CEPF projects (IUCN)
4. NBSAP Review Project (UNEP)

5. Vanuatu Institutional Strengthening (ODS) (VAN IS) (UNEP)
6. Hydrochlorofluorocarbons Phase Out Management Plan project (UNEP)
7. ODS Alternatives Survey (UNEP).

9. Ministry and Policy Framework

The protection and conservation of the environment is a cross-cutting issue, supporting both economic and social development. This has meant that the work of DEPC is governed by broad policy and legislative frameworks that link across a number of subject areas, including across MCCA.

At the national level, the work of DEPC has been guided by:

- Acts and regulations of the Republic of Vanuatu
- The National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) and its predecessor, the Priorities and Action Agenda (PAA)
- The National Environment Policy and Implementation Plan 2016 – 2030 (NEPIP)
- The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)
- The National Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan (NIISAP)
- Sectoral policies such as the National Energy Road Map, the Forest Policy and the Vanuatu Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy.

Many environmental issues also cross state boundaries. As part of the international community, the work of DEPC is guided by international policies and laws including those relating to biodiversity, the trade in endangered species, the movement of hazardous wastes and ozone layer protection.

About this Report

This report outlines major developments and initiatives carried out by DEPC between January and December 2016.

10. Reporting Requirements

Business Planning and Reporting is a requirement of the PSC for all institutions to provide on an annual basis.

11. Reporting Processes

This document comprises of a collection of reports put together by the Acting Director, heads of the divisions within DEPC (the Principal Officers and the Administration and Finance Officer) and compiled by the Environment Legal Support Officer.¹⁰

¹⁰ AVID.

SECTION TWO – PERFORMANCE 2016

Department Performance Overview

1. Achievements

The DEPC's key achievements in 2016 were:

- New structure approved by PSC

The re-structuring work started some years back and was approved by PSC in February 2016. The recruitment of new DEPC officers followed after the structure was approved. Three officers were recruited, that is the Senior Officer Chemical and Ozone, EIA officer and Pollution Control Officer. The Pollution Control Officer did not come on-board until the beginning of 2017.

Most of the Divisions of DEPC have been operated by one officer with each officer having to deal with a huge amount of responsibility. The full implementation of the new structure will greatly assist with the workload and the responsibilities mandated in the Acts that DEPC is administering, helping to ensure they will be effectively executed.

- Environment incorporated as one of the pillars of the NSDP

Environment has not been, or has been included to a lesser extent, in the national plans and priorities before. In 2016, environment was incorporated as one of the main pillars of the NSDP. This shows that the Government is putting its emphasis now on environmental protection and safeguards. It is a commitment of the Government, through DEPC and the respective Departments whose responsibility is environment-related, to implement these plans.

- NEPIP approved by the COM

This is a milestone for the DEPC as for the first time ever this significant document was developed and approved by the COM in September 2016. The development of this National Environment Policy and Implementation Plan (NEPIP) started in 2012. It has been a long journey to approval by COM in 2016. The launching of the NEPIP will happen in the 1st quarter of 2017.

- Approval of amendments to the EPC Act and EIA Regulations by the COM

The DEPC worked on a COM paper in 2016 seeking approval of the amendment of the EPC Act and the EIA Regulations. COM endorsed this and work was undertaken with support from ADB TA on drafting instructions sent to the SLO. This work had been progressing well however it was put on hold when instructions were provided for drafting of the legislation. This will continue into 2017.

- First national clean up day

In Vanuatu, clean up days have occurred intermittently across various locations and communities. Usually led by communities or NGOs, these clean up events have demonstrated the increasing awareness of the importance of waste management and strong desire for government led action.

Annually, World Clean up Day and International Coastal Clean up Day fall on the third weekend of September. In alignment with World Clean up Day and International Coastal Clean up Day, 2016 saw the first national, coordinated clean up event where clean ups occurred across all six provinces and three municipalities. The first Vanuatu National Clean up Day, World Ozone Day and National POPs Day was an ambitious undertaking that required dedication and commitment from all coordinating committee members, government staff, schools and community members. With participation from sectors across private businesses, NGOs, government, associations and communities, the success of the first national clean up demonstrates the achievements that can be accomplished when all sectors of society work together.

Table 5: Department Performance: Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation 2016

Program	Objective (Target)	Result ✓ ✘	Key Results and Highlights
Develop an appropriate legislative framework to lead and guide clean, resilient and sustainable development	Develop waste regulations	Ongoing	An outline of draft regulations for the licensing of private waste operators was prepared with the assistance of ADB-TA 9073. The DEPC consulted with private waste operators regarding the introduction of regulations. Stakeholders were generally supportive of the proposal. Further consultation with private waste operators and the State Law Office (SLO) is anticipated in 2017.
	Develop pollution control regulations	Ongoing	With the assistance of ADB-TA 9073, DEPC clarified the relationship between an Environmental Permit under the EPC Act and a Discharge Permit under the Pollution Control Act. This enabled DEPC to identify what types of activities should be included in pollution control regulations. An outline of draft regulations for Discharge Permits was prepared.
	Finalise specified species regulations	Ongoing	A preliminary list of species was prepared for discussion with other agencies. Further research regarding the species to be listed in the regulations, including cross referencing existing scientific studies, is required. Work on these regulations is scheduled to continue in the second half of 2017.
	Review and amend the EPC Act	Ongoing	Amendments to the EPC Act were approved by the COM on 15 September 2016. Drafting instructions were subsequently submitted to the SLO. The DEPC continues to work with the SLO to draft the necessary amendments. It is anticipated that the amendments to the EPC Act will be introduced into Parliament in 2017.

Table 5: Department Performance: Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation 2016

Program	Objective (Target)	Result ✓ ✘	Key Results and Highlights
	Review and amend the EIA Regulations	Ongoing	Amendments to the EIA Regulations were approved by the COM on 15 September 2016. Drafting instructions were subsequently submitted to the SLO. The DEPC continues to work with the SLO to draft the necessary amendments.
	Review and amend the CITES Act and regulations	✘	This review is scheduled to commence in the second half of 2017.
	Amend the OLP Act and regulations	✘	The National Ozone Unit was not staffed in 2016.
	Review the NBSAP	Ongoing	Three national workshops were held in 2016.
	Revise the NWMS	Ongoing	The NWMS has been amended to include pollution management and broader waste issues such as disaster waste and wastewater. This revised strategy has been renamed the National Waste Management and Pollution Control Strategy and Implementation Plan 2016-2020. Stakeholder consultations have taken place and the strategy will be submitted to the COM in 2017.
	Develop the State of Environment Report through 'Cross Cutting Capacity Development Project'	Ongoing	Processes to recruit staff for the Cross Cutting Capacity Development Project started in 2016. The project itself will commence in 2017.
	Accede to the Ramsar Convention	Ongoing	Awareness activities on preventing invasive Tilapia Fish coming into Lake Letas were held with schools and communities. Signboards were erected at Gaua airport and the entrances to the Lake. Lake Letas is the national

Table 5: Department Performance: Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation 2016

Program	Objective (Target)	Result ✓ ✗	Key Results and Highlights
			candidate site for accession to the Ramsar Convention.
	Accede to chemical conventions (Basel, Rotterdam, Minamata)	✗	
Strengthen compliance and enforcement of environmental legislation	Strengthen DEPC compliance through training workshops with DEPC divisions	✗	The DEPC was without a Compliance Officer in 2016 and faced difficulties finding a suitable candidate for this post.
	Review and process Environmental Permit applications	✓	85 Environmental Permit applications were received in 2016. This is ongoing work for the Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment Division. More details about the processing of applications are in the divisional summary below.
	Review and process CCA applications	Ongoing	DEPC worked with three conservation areas who have shown interest to register their CCAs. Their draft managements have been developed and will go under community review and awareness before processing of their application for legal registration. This is ongoing work for the Biodiversity and Conservation Division. More details about the processing of applications are in the divisional summary below.
	Review and process flora and fauna research applications	Ongoing	One research application was received in 2016.

Table 5: Department Performance: Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation 2016

Program	Objective (Target)	Result ✓ ✘	Key Results and Highlights
	Process waste operators permits	✘	Regulations are required before permits may be issued (refer above).
	Process pollution emission and discharge permits	✘	Regulations are required before permits may be issued (refer above).
	Process ODS import permits	✘	The National Ozone Unit was not staffed in 2016.
	Undertake compliance work on development activities/operations and impose appropriate enforcement actions	Ongoing	One penalty notice was issued in 2016.
	Create complaints database	✓	A joint complaints/compliance database has been established for use in 2017.
	Create CCA database	Ongoing	A project proposal was developed in partnership with Endemia organisation for Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIP) to extend the existing initiative on the CCA database. Project will commence in 2017.
	Undertake compliance training with DEPC staff on national legislation and MEAs	✘	The DEPC was without a Compliance Officer in 2016 and faced difficulties finding a suitable candidate for this post.
	Identify enforcement gaps in legislation and inform divisional heads	✘	The DEPC was without a Compliance Officer in 2016 and faced difficulties finding a suitable candidate for this post.

Table 5: Department Performance: Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation 2016

Program	Objective (Target)	Result ✓ ✘	Key Results and Highlights
	Improve enforcement and compliance with other agencies through awareness raising	✘	The DEPC was without a Compliance Officer in 2016 and faced difficulties finding a suitable candidate for this post.
	Carry out environmental audits	✓	The DEPC, Department of Water and the Geology and Mines Unit conducted joint inspections of the South Paray Bay Channel Dredging Project under the VISSP.
	Create database for compliance	✓	A joint complaints/compliance database has been established for use in 2017.
Improve coordination between all stakeholders (government sector, private sector, donor partners and NGOs)	Develop communication and marketing strategies	✘	Work on this strategy is scheduled to commence in the 2017.
	Improve coordination with stakeholders to commemorate World Environment Day /convention days / National Environment week	✓	Partnerships with stakeholders were strengthened with the formation of new private-public relationships. These new relationships included businesses such as Bank of the South Pacific, Vanuatu Water, South Sea Shipping and Vanuatu Gas. Existing relationships with other government departments and NGOs improved through the inclusion of stakeholders in committees, meetings and strategic planning, resulting in improved communication and coordination.
	Develop DEPC Website	Ongoing	The website creation progressed well early in the year but did not progress due to busy schedule of the consultant. Toward end of 2016 a new consultant was asked to finalise the website. He will commence work on this in 2017.

Table 5: Department Performance: Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation 2016

Program	Objective (Target)	Result ✓ ✘	Key Results and Highlights
	Develop standard information and awareness guideline on the impacts of natural disasters on the natural environment and wildlife	✘	
	Finalise memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Sanma Province	✘	
	Finalise MOU with the Vanuatu Customs and Inland Revenue Department and Biosecurity Vanuatu	✘	The finalisation of this MOU is dependent on the review and amendment of the CITES Act and Regulations. This review is scheduled to commence in the second half of 2017.
Develop and implement the NEPIP	Review and combine the National Environment Policy /National Environment Management Strategy	✓	The draft National Environment Policy and National Environment Management Strategy were combined to form the NEPIP. The NEPIP was approved by the COM on 29 September 2016.
Improve the resourcing, revenue collection, and working environment for DEPC	Restructure DEPC	✓	A new structure for DEPC was approved by PSC on 19 February 2016.
	Implement the new DEPC structure	Ongoing	Following the approval of the new DEPC structure, two new permanent staff commenced work with the DEPC in 2016. Two additional permanent staff members have been recruited and will start work in 2017. A fourth recruitment process is currently awaiting consideration by PSC.

Table 5: Department Performance: Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation 2016

Program	Objective (Target)	Result ✓ ✘	Key Results and Highlights
	Increase the DEPC operational budget to reflect the 70/30 government target	Ongoing	DEPC's operational budget increased from 1,864,107vt in 2015 to 6,844,455vt
	Provide modern equipment and furniture to staff to improve service delivery	Ongoing	A new double cabin truck and five new computers were purchased in 2016.
	Undertake assets audit annually	✘	
	New office space for DEPC	Ongoing	Work commenced on a new office space within the MCCA compound.
	Improve revenue collection through permitting systems and compliance	Ongoing	Environmental Permit applications increased from 58 in 2015 to 85 in 2016. Applications incur a 20,000vt fee.
	Progress the Environment Trust Fund for establishment with preparation of a Developmental Committee of Officials (DCO) paper	✘	Preliminary steps for establishing an operational Environment Trust Fund are scheduled to occur in 2017.

2. Biodiversity and Conservation Division

The table below describes the activities of the Biodiversity and Conservation Division in 2016 in more detail. Further descriptions of the objectives, activities and results follow this table.

Table 6: Activities of the Biodiversity and Conservation Division

Objective (Target)		Result Summary
Management of CCAs	Number of registered CCA management plan conditions adhered to	Three registered CCAs have faced breaches of their management plan rules: Vatthe and Penoru on Santo and Amal Krab Bay Tabu Eria (AKTE) on Malekula island.
	Number of registered CCAs submitting their annual report	At end of every year CCAs inform DEPC, through an annual monitoring report, of how the respective management committees are managing the areas. This year two communities completed their reports. The other three CCAs will submit their reports in early 2017.
Review and process research applications	National Biodiversity Advisory Council established	The National Biodiversity Advisory Council members were formally appointed by the Minister.
	Number of research applications received and approved	Only one research application was received in 2016.
Management and control of invasive species	Number of areas infested by Little Red Fire Ant (LFA) treated	Nine LFA infested sites were treated twice each in 2016. Treatment will continue in 2017.
	Number of <i>Meremia peltata</i> tools purchased for management of vine	Six sets of <i>Meremia peltata</i> tools were ordered, produced and purchased by the GEF-PAS IAS project.
	Number of training sessions on invasive species management	One training session was provided to Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Port Vila on protocols for LFA chemical preparation and application in the field.
	National invasive species database established	The national invasive species database known as Van-Invasives was developed and established online. This was a collaborative project with Live and Learn Vanuatu.
	Number of inventories on priority	60 invasive species inventories were conducted on the islands of Gaua, Santo, Malekula,

Objective (Target)		Result Summary
	invasive species	Erromango, Tanna and Aneityum. The information collected was used in the Van-Invasives database.
Biodiversity and ecosystem management, conservation and restoration	Number of strategies and plans developed and approved	The review of the NBSAP continued through three national consultations and a final draft was produced. A final validation workshop will be held in 2017.
	Number of policies on management and protection of biodiversity and ecosystems developed and approved	The national ocean policy is one of the major activities for the MACBIO project currently being hosted by DEPC. The final draft National Ocean Policy was developed and finalised and is planned for launching in March 2017.
	Number of national wetland sites agreed by respective communities and designated for protection	Vanuatu's preparation for accession to the Ramsar Convention includes a national candidate site. This is Lake Letas and it will become the first national wetland designated site in the country. This same site is also a proposed CCA and a draft management plan has been developed.
Biodiversity assessment	Number of biodiversity assessments carried out and report produced	Lake Letas rapid biodiversity assessment report produced and submitted for printing. Wairua Nature Reserve rapid terrestrial fauna assessment carried out for inclusion in its management plan.
Project proposal development for sustainable management, conservation and restoration of biodiversity, ecosystems and natural resources	Number of projects developed and approved	R2R project approved and implementation commenced. The project focuses on management of Tagabe River catchment in Port Vila.
		GEF/UNDP Mainstreaming Global Environmental Priorities into National Policies and Programs Project and the ISLCM project will commence in quarter 1 2017.
		A GEF 6/IUCN Project Identification Form (PIF) national workshop was held this year. A final draft PIF is available awaiting confirmation of co-financing letters from Vanuatu prior submission to GEF secretariat.

Objective (Target)		Result Summary
Awareness raising and information management	Number of awareness materials produced	Two posters were developed, one on national wetlands management and the other on endemic bird species of Vanuatu. Posters were used during the Lapita festival held at Teouma and the Birds of Vanuatu book author memorial exhibition at the Vanuatu Cultural Centre. Posters were also distributed to schools, interested local communities and DEPC clients.
	National Clearing House Mechanism for Biodiversity Issues	The NSBAP project Coordinator progressed this work but it is yet to be completed.

Review and process CCA applications

In 2015/2016, eight communities expressed interest to DEPC for assistance to legally protect their conservation areas. Out of the eight, four have developed their draft management plans and they are going through reviews and awareness before they are finalised (a management plan is a requirement when applying for legal registration as a CCA): Lake Letas CCA on Gaua; Kauri Reserve on Erromango; Homo Bay at South Pentecost; and Lelepa Island Tours marine conservation area.

Wairua Nature Reserve as the fifth CCA is at the stage of gathering information and has completed a terrestrial fauna assessment for drafting its management plan. The other three, Keasi Forest Reserve, Ifira marine conservation area and Tipinime are at the very initial stages of their preparation for registration.

Management of CCAs

Three CCAs have raised and submitted reports on incidents where their CCA management rules have not been followed. Amal Krab Bay Tabu Eria (AKTE) is one of the CCAs that have successfully dealt with its poachers (except one that is awaiting further action). The Penoru CCA management committee has also dealt with its trespassers/poachers through all village court systems. One case where four offenders have bypassed the village court system has been referred to DEPC to further look into it. Vathe CCA management committee have taken initial steps to deal with their issues. These cases could have been more efficiently dealt with if a Compliance Officer was recruited.

Review and process research application

Part 4, division 1 of the EPC Act describes the process in which research applications are approved. First of all it provides for the establishment of a National Biodiversity Advisory Council. This year the Minister responsible formally appointed members of the council which comprised of the Director of DEPC as the chair of the council, and five other members coming from Department of Forests, Vanuatu Fisheries Department, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Department of Foreign Affairs and the Vanuatu Cultural Centre.

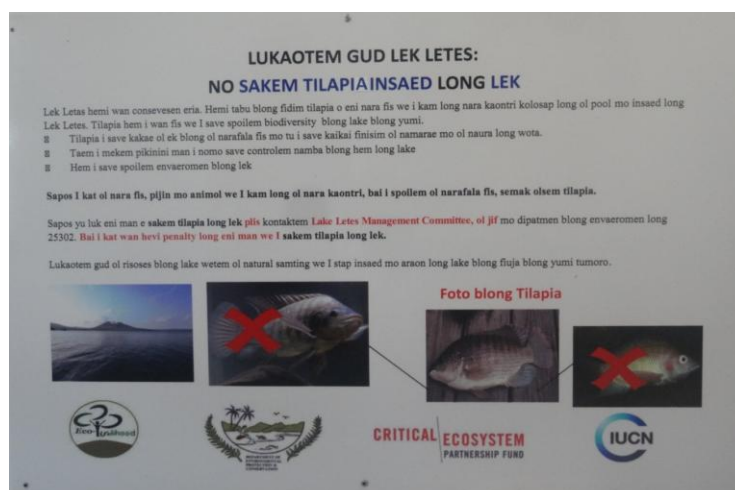
Management and control of invasive species

In 2013, when the GEF-PAS IAS project was commencing, DEPC and Biosecurity Vanuatu identified nine sites of LFA. A number of chemical applications have been carried out at these sites over the last three years and two applications were carried out on the Santo and Port Vila sites in 2016. The same project also purchased sets of *Merremia peltata* vine tools. The tools will be used on six conservation sites on Gaua, Santo, Pentecost, Efate and Tanna. This project also funded the priority invasive species survey. Biosecurity Vanuatu and DEPC collaborated on this survey. DEPC also worked with the Live and Learn Invasive Species project to establish the Van Invasive database. The local company Computer Network Services (CNS) was contracted to do this work. CNS also provided training to Biosecurity Vanuatu and DEPC staff on how to update and administer the database.

Biodiversity and ecosystems management, conservation and restoration

The NBSAP of 1999 is currently under review. Three national workshops were held to provide information that was not captured in last year's consultations. A final draft will be submitted to DEPC for further review and to use in final consultations prior finalising the document.

Vanuatu, through DEPC is preparing itself to accede to the Ramsar Convention in 2017. Ecolifelihood Development Association (EDA) has accessed funds through the CEPF and assisted DEPC to work on the accession documents. CEPF funds are only for NGOs and not the government. Therefore EDA received the funds and assisting with the preparation of the documents. As part of acceding to the Ramsar Convention, Vanuatu must nominate a wetland for listing under the convention. Lake Letas on Gaua Island is the first candidate site.



Biodiversity assessment and reporting

The Gaua Lake Letas fauna biodiversity assessment report was completed and submitted to FAO for publication along with assessments for South Pentecost Homo Bay Conservation Area and Erromango Kauri Reserve.

The division also assisted Wairua Nature Reserve with its fauna assessment. The information is needed for inclusion in its CCA management plan. Flora biodiversity assessments will be undertaken by the Department of Forests in February 2017.

Participation in meetings and workshops

The division participated in a lot of national and regional meetings this year and worked with other relevant organisations regarding the implementation of activities that cut across sectors. This includes activities for the FPAM project hosted by the Department of Forests and the Vanuatu Fisheries Department's Community Based Resource Management project. The division, along with the other divisions of DEPC, was also part of a series of meetings working on the NSDP and NEPIP.

3. Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment Division

The table below describes the activities of the Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment Division in 2016 in more detail. Further descriptions of the objectives, activities and results follow this table.

Table 7: Activities of the Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment Division

Objective (Target)	Result Summary	
Review and process Environmental Permit applications and improve revenue collection through permitting systems and compliance	Number of projects approved and granted an Environmental Permit	Out of 85 project applications registered, 56 were granted an Environmental Permit with conditions, 3 were granted an Environmental Permit following the submission of an EIA report.
	Number of projects refused an Environmental Permit	0
	Number of Environmental Permit applications discontinued and cancelled	One project application was discontinued and cancelled because the proponent did not provide information required by DEPC within a reasonable time.
	Number of Environmental Permit applications requiring EIA reports	Three applications required EIA reports to be prepared.
	Number of EIA reports reviewed by the Committee	One EIA report was reviewed by the Committee.
	Number of Environmental Permit applications requiring EIA reports approved	One Environmental Permit application that required an EIA report was approved.
Registration of EIA	Number of new EIA consultants	Two new EIA consultants were

Objective (Target)		Result Summary
consultants	registered	registered, with certificates, in 2016.
	Number of EIA consultants registrations renewed	Four registrations were renewed in 2016.
Enhanced coordination between all stakeholders (government sector, private sector, donor partners and NGOs)	Number of land negotiator certificates signed by DEPC	Land negotiator certificates form part of the land reform process administered by the Department of Lands and require input from DEPC. Over 200 applications were signed by the Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment Division in 2016.
	Number of Land Management Planning Committee (LMPC) meetings attended	The division attended over 10 LMPC meetings in 2016.
Information management	Updating of EIA Database	The EIA Database is up-to-date. The EIA Database is continually updated by the Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment Division, in partnership with the Finance, Administration and Support Services Division. The EIA Database was created to keep track of the progress of Environmental Permit applications.

Review and amend the EPC Act and EIA Regulations

The review of part 3 of the EPC Act and EIA Regulations continued in 2016. It is an ongoing project for the Environmental Planning and Assessment Division and is supported by ADB-TA 9073. Following policy development in 2015 and 2016, in September 2016 DEPC received approval from the COM to prepare the amendments. Drafting instructions developed through a series of workshops internally, through ADB-TA 7566 and with other relevant government agencies, were submitted to the SLO in October/November 2016. A number of draft supporting materials such as environmental guidelines, forms and templates were prepared. However, these may only be finalised once the legislation has been drafted and approved.

Review and process Environmental Permit applications

Every year, the Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment Division receives over 50 Environmental Permit applications. In 2016, the division received a total of 85 Environment Permit applications for screening and reviewing. Out of the 85 applications, 59 were approved, one was cancelled, seven required more information and 18 are still ongoing. The figure below shows the number of applications received for each category of project.

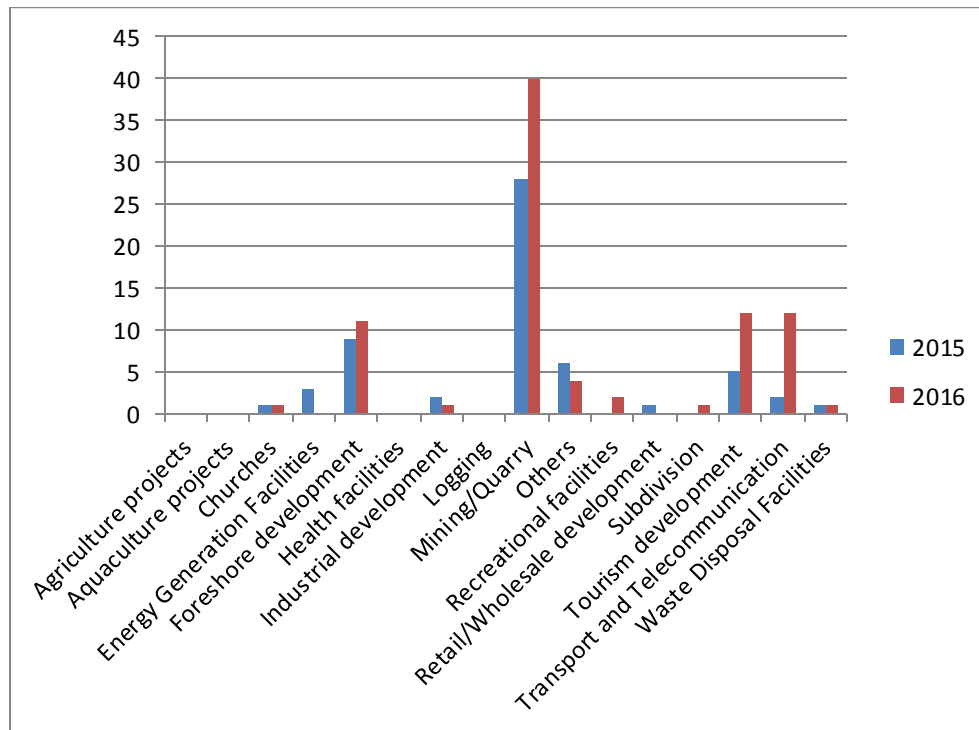


Figure 1: Number of applications versus different types of development projects, 2015-2016

Figure 1 show that mining/quarrying activities had the most applications registered in 2016, followed by tourism development activities, other development activities (including excavations, seawalls above the mean high water mark and commercial buildings) and foreshore developments. All other types of development were below two applications.

Monitoring and compliance of development projects

There are currently a number of large infrastructure projects being constructed in Vanuatu. In 2016 the Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment Division worked with officers from the Vanuatu Project Management Unit, VISSP, Department of Water and the Geology and Mines unit to undertake a number of monitoring inspections and site visits and strengthen working relationships across government.

Working relationships, particularly with the Geology and Mines Unit, continued to strengthen in 2016. This has helped improve coordination and client relationships by enabling DEPC officers to explain how the EIA process links with other development processes such as obtaining foreshore development consent, quarry and mining approvals and planning permission. All officers involved in EIA were involved in customer service activities throughout the year.



Figure 2: Monitoring dredging and reclamation at the South Paray Wharf project site

4. Provincial Outreach Division

Information and communication

In 2016 the division assisted a number of students in preparing school and university assignments on environmental issues. For example, by providing posters and information and answering questions.

Provincial Outreach

As DEPC's representative in Sanma Province, the Sanma Environment Extension Officer coordinates DEPC's activities in the province. This involves working across all divisions of DEPC.

In relation to biodiversity and conservation, the Sanma Environment Extension Officer: attended a forestry workshop on the REDD+ project; participated in meetings to address issues arising in the Vatthe CCA; worked with the Vatthe and North West Santo CCA management committees to prepare their annual reports; encouraged communities in West Malo and South Santo to designate areas as CCAs, introducing the CCA process; attended a presentation on the development of the Kerepua CCA management plan; attended training run by Biosecurity Vanuatu on the treatment of fruit fly; assisted with the LFA assessment and eradication program in the Mango area; worked with the Biodiversity and Conservation Division and Live and Learn on the development of the invasive species database.

In relation to EIA, the Sanma Extension Officer undertook site inspections and prepared PEAs for projects including retaining sea walls, resorts, jetties and the new correctional centre; visited the trial of the fish processing plant; and examined land applications.

In relation to environmental protection, the Sanma Environment Extension Officer works with the designated waste management operators in the province. In 2016 this included participating in joint Sanma Provincial Council and Luganville Municipal Council waste management team meetings; reviewing the NWMS and the Sanma Luganville Waste Management Plan; arranging logistics for the

regional PacWaste meeting; coordinating aspects of clean up day; and attending a demonstration on composting.

The division also worked with the Finance, Administration and Support Services Division to undertake a field survey on the use of ozone depleting substances.

Provincial matters

As a provincial officer, the Sanma Environment Officer was also called upon to assist in a number of provincial matters including:

- Assisting Sanma Provincial Council staff in preparing for the provincial election, snap general election and Sanma Day celebrations
- Participating in community consultation workshops on disaster risk reduction. For example, to develop tsunami evacuation maps, routes and signs and learn about mainstreaming disaster risk reduction.
- Participating in consultation and awareness activities, including the Sanma Provincial Forum, on the five year strategic plan for the province
- Attending meetings with other government agencies to resolve land issues. For example, issues in Port Olry between land owners and tour operators.

5. Environmental Protection Division

Solid Waste Management Plans

In accordance to the Waste Management Act, all designated waste management operators must develop and implement respective Solid Waste Management Plans (SWMPs). As the division responsible for waste management, the Environmental Protection Division plays an important role in assisting designated waste operators to develop their plans. In 2016, Shefa Province was the only operator to have their SWMP endorsed by the Council. With the exception of Port Vila Municipality, all other provinces and municipalities are currently finalising their respective SWMP drafts. It is expected that most SWMPs will be endorsed in 2017.

In 2016 the Environmental Protection Division was involved in a number regional waste and pollution projects.

Table 8: Activities of the Environmental Protection Division

Environmental Protection Division: Performance 2016		
Regional Waste and Pollution Projects		
Key Area	Project Information	Key Results and Highlights

Environmental Protection Division: Performance 2016

Regional Waste and Pollution Projects

Key Area	Project Information	Key Results and Highlights
Japanese Technical Cooperation Project for Promotion of Regional Initiative on Solid Waste Management in Pacific Island Countries (J-PRISM) Phase I	Phase one of this project (February 2011 – February 2016) was focused on strengthening the human and institutional capacity base for sustainable solid waste management in the Pacific Region through the implementation of the Pacific Regional Solid Waste Management Strategy (2010-2015).	2016 saw the end to J-PRISM Phase I and the commencement of the J-PRISM Phase II scoping mission. The outcomes of the scoping missions will be used to direct J-PRISM II objectives and expected outcomes.
Pacific POPs Release Reduction Project (GEFPAS POPs)	This five year project (2013-2018) mainly targets the unintentional production of Persistent Organic Pollutants (uPOPs). The main sources of uPOPs are open burning, waste incinerators, waste oil spillage, industrial processes and burning of plastics, PVC, and electrical cables. In doing so, the project looks at improving the management of solid and hazardous waste in the region.	The Vanuatu uPOPs Awareness Project Profile was submitted to the Prime Minister's office, however due to a lack of staff (no permanent staff due to extended leave and delays in recruitment of new ozone and pollution officer), no updates on the progress of registration were obtained in 2016.
PacWaste	The main activities of the PacWaste project include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health care waste management • Asbestos management • E-waste management • Atoll waste management <p>The project runs from May 2013 to March 2017.</p>	<p>Asbestos removed December 2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paonangisu healthcenter 2000 m² Presbyterian college 2000m² Port villa hospital 2400m² Malapoa college 1000m² cladding and 600 m roofing. <p>104 pieces of E-waste collected from the Ministry of Health.</p> <p>Health care waste management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Espiritu Santo, Sanma Province Northern District Hospital: Installation of incinerator complete • Malakula, Malampa Province Norsup Hospital: Slab complete and incinerator positioned, fuel tank missing

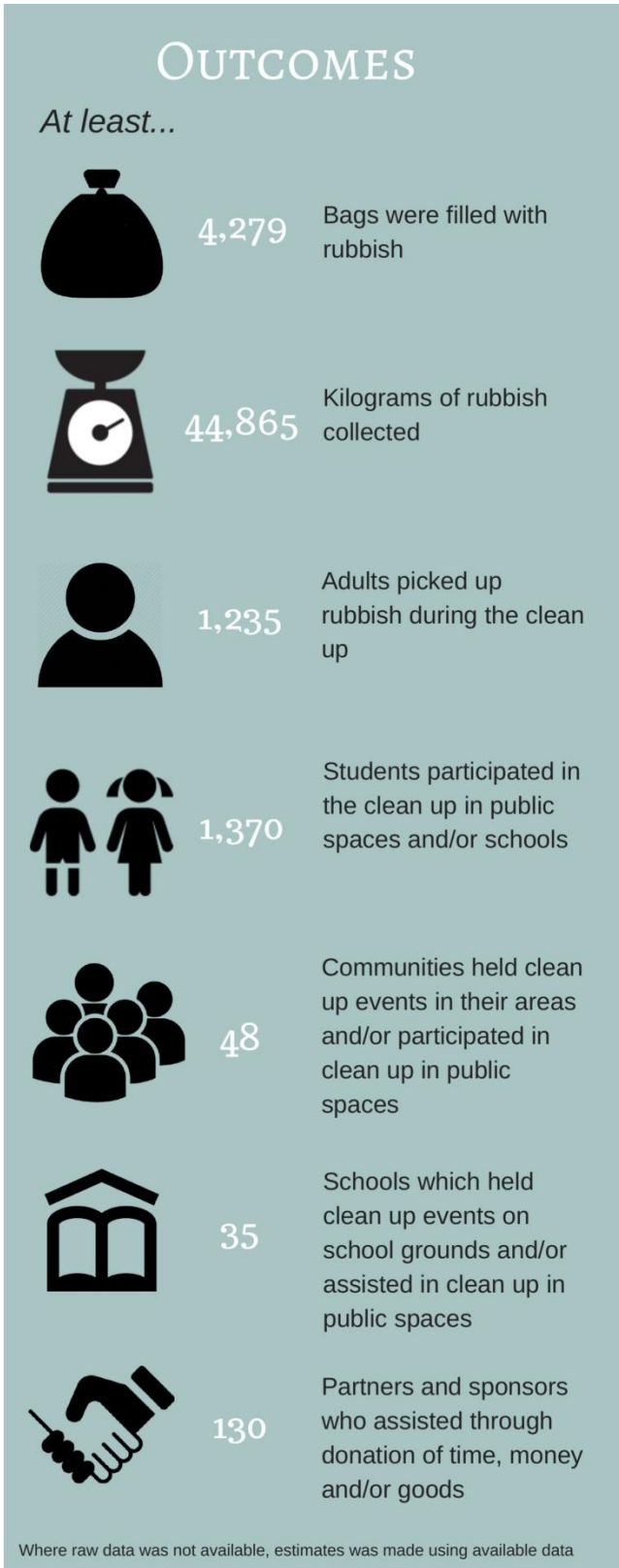
Environmental Protection Division: Performance 2016

Regional Waste and Pollution Projects

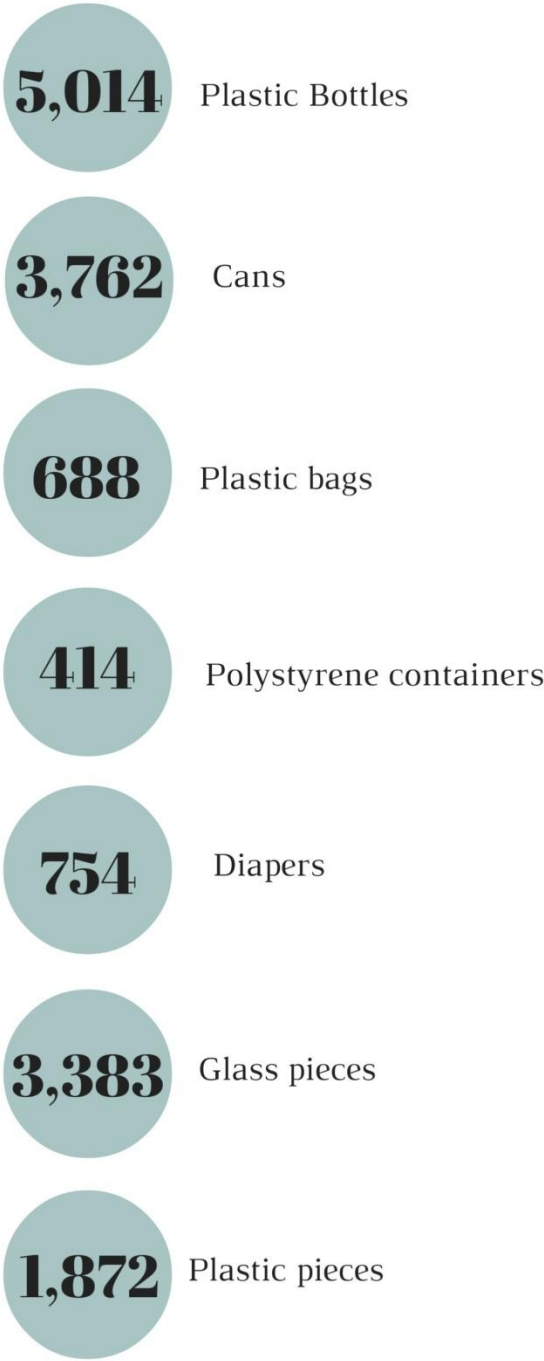
Key Area	Project Information	Key Results and Highlights
		and difficulties faced in getting materials for the shelter (all materials ordered) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tanna, Tafea Province Lenakel Hospital: Slab and shelter complete. Incinerator to be positioned in January 2017. Positioning will be followed by curing, commissioning and training.• Ambae, Penama Province, Lolowai Hospital: Work to commence in January 2017.
Continuing Regional Support for the Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Global Monitoring Plan (GMP)	The GMP for POPs aims to strengthen Vanuatu's capacity to adhere to the Stockholm Convention by generating data on the concentration of POPs in human milk, air and water. Monitoring will take place from 2016 until 2018.	Awaiting hire of Senior Officer (Chemical and Ozone). Officer appointed December 2016.

National Clean up Day

As mentioned above, a highlight for DEPC, particularly the Environmental Protection Division, was the success of the combined first Vanuatu National Clean up Day, World Ozone Day and National POPs Day. The success of this ambitious undertaking demonstrated the achievements that can be accomplished when all coordinating committee members, government staff, private businesses, NGOs, schools, associations and community members work together. Figure 3 illustrates some of the key achievements of the first national clean up.



What we collected in Torba and Penama*



* Data was extrapolated from ICC 2016 data forms. Data was not collected in all locations and hence these outcomes greatly underestimates the volume of waste collected during the clean up

Figure 3: Outcomes of the first Vanuatu National Clean up Day, World Ozone Day and National POPs Day 2016

6. Finance, Administration and Support Services Division

The table below describes the activities of the Finance, Administration and Support Services Division in 2016 in more detail. Further descriptions of the objectives, activities and results follow this table.

Table 9: Activities of the Finance, Administration and Support Services Division

Support Services Division: Performance 2016	
Key Area	Key Results and Highlights
Customer service	Responded to incoming calls and answered queries. Provided information to walk-in clients on environmental processes. For example, registering CCAs and applying for Environmental Permits and CITES permits. The Sanma Extension Officer played a similar role in Santo. Assisted students seeking information on environmental issues by referring them to the right division of DEPC.
Meetings	There were a number of meetings held in 2016 and the Finance, Administration and Support Services Division was responsible for organising logistics (i.e. venue and catering), raising LPOs and distributing invitation letters.
Staff travel	Organised travel for DEPC staff.
Staff annual leave	Maintained details of staff leave. The Principal Environment Officer was on study leave in 2016.
Office assets purchased	Purchased a new double cabin truck and five new computers.
Support to other divisions within the DEPC	The Driver and Messenger ran a number of training sessions on the eradication of LFA and treated a number of areas under the GEF-PAS IAS project. In general, the division provided a lot of support to other divisions.

Finance

An important function of the Finance, Administration and Support Services Division is to manage DEPC's budget. The table and graph below summarise the different expenses made throughout the year.

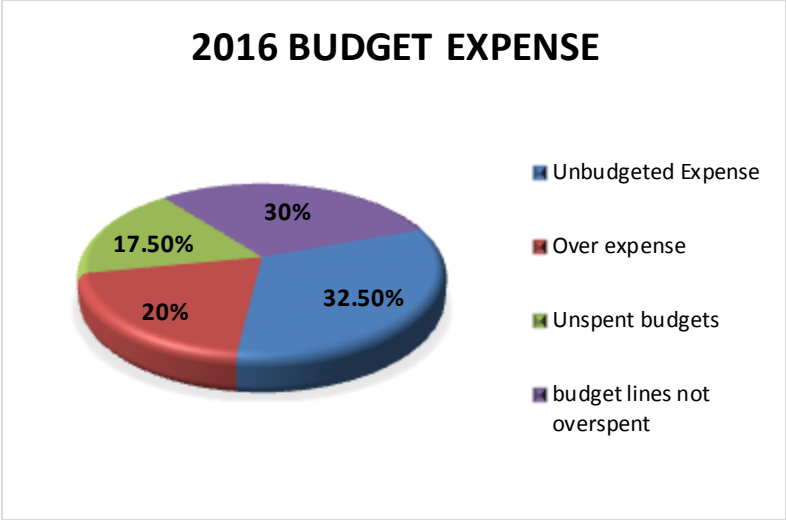


Figure 4: 2016 budget expenses



Figure 5: DEPC's new double cabin truck

Table 10: Summary DEPC expenses in 2016

Expenses Detail Report

Government
of Vanuatu

For transactions between 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2016

Filters Applied to this Report	
Fund	2-Recurrent Fund
Ministry	M20-Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation, Geohazards, Meteorology and Energy
Dept	
Cost Centre	6401-Environment Unit
Activity	MGEA-Environmental management, research and extension Services
Job Code	
Currency	Vatu
Book	Primary Book (vatu)

Account	Description	Actual	Commitment	Total	Budget	Under/(Over)
	Personnel Expenses					
8AAA	Acting Allowances	795,421	-	795,421	-	(795,421)
8AAF	Family Allowance	215,924	-	215,924	360,000	144,076
8AAH	Housing Allowances	1,285,922	-	1,285,922	2,100,000	814,078
8AAO	Other Allowances	85,000	-	85,000	-	(85,000)
8AAP	Home Island Passage Allowances	73,920	-	73,920	200,000	126,080
8AAS	Special Allowances	-	-	-	200,000	200,000
8ASP	Provident Fund	469,193	-	469,193	616,514	147,321
8AWL	Leave expense	265,804	-	265,804	-	(265,804)
8AWO	Overtime Wages	158,484	-	158,484	-	(158,484)
8AWP	Permanent Wages	12,404,618	-	12,404,618	19,852,880	7,448,262
PAYR	Payroll expenses	-	-	-	(7,360,150)	(7,360,150)
	Personnel Expenses	15,754,286	-	15,754,286	15,969,244	214,958
	Operating Expenses					
8CAB	Subsistence Allowances	570,000	-	570,000	300,000	(270,000)
8CBI	International Accommodation	(27,000)	-	(27,000)	-	27,000

8CBL	Local Accommodation	12,000	-	12,000	150,000	138,000
8CET	Other Fees	28,125	-	28,125	60,000	31,875
8CFV	Vehicles Fuel	102,223	-	102,223	260,000	157,777
8CIF	Facilities Hire	15,000	-	15,000	-	(15,000)
8CIV	Vehicles Hire	-	-	-	390,000	390,000
8CJO	Office Cleaning	51,817	-	51,817	100,000	48,183
8CKD	Advertising - Communications	251,744	-	251,744	80,000	(171,744)
8CKP	Postage - Communications	2,311	-	2,311	60,000	57,689
8CKR	Printing - Communications	(68,907)	-	(68,907)	200,000	268,907
8CKS	Stationery - Communications	481,249	-	481,249	228,000	(253,249)
8CKT	Telephone / Fax - Communications	98,753	-	98,753	120,000	21,247
8CMG	General - Materials	34,121	-	34,121	-	(34,121)
8CMO	Office - Materials	177,387	-	177,387	355,000	177,613
8CNT	Other Rental	-	-	-	100,000	100,000
8COI	Incidentals	322,505	-	322,505	47,776	(274,729)
8COP	Official Entertainment	651,694	-	651,694	400,000	(251,694)
8COT	Termination Payment	713,655	-	713,655	-	(713,655)
8COU	Uniforms	-	-	-	200,000	200,000
8CRB	Buildings Repairs & Maintenance	263,992	-	263,992	-	(263,992)
8CRE	Equipment Repairs & Maintenance	332,976	-	332,976	250,000	(82,976)
8CRM	Maintenance Contract	533,334	-	533,334	-	(533,334)
8CRV	Vehicles Repairs & Maintenance	(1,156)	-	(1,156)	286,000	287,156
8CRW	Vehicle Servicing	40,605	-	40,605	-	(40,605)
8CTI	International Travel	130,316	-	130,316	-	(130,316)
8CTL	Local Travel	279,284	-	279,284	300,000	20,716
8CUE	Electricity Utilities	88,889	-	88,889	1,080,000	991,111
8CUW	Water Utilities	-	-	-	180,000	180,000
8CWL	Local Workshops	25,000	-	25,000	200,000	175,000
8CZV	Value Added Tax	677,178	-	677,178	762,679	85,501
8EEA	Equipment - Additional General	532,805	-	532,805	200,000	(332,805)
8EEC	Equipment - Computer	1,188,426	-	1,188,426	300,000	(888,426)
8EER	Equipment - Replacement General	-	-	-	235,000	235,000
8EFO	Furniture - Office Furniture	151,129	-	151,129	-	(151,129)
OVER	Overhead expenses	-	-	-	860,000	860,000
	Operating Expenses	7,659,455	-	7,659,455	7,704,455	45,000
	Total Expenditure	23,413,741	-	23,413,741	23,673,699	259,958

Most of the expenses incurred in 2016 were unbudgeted. The DEPC had obligations that had to be met including:

- A termination payment made to the outgoing Compliance Officer including a payment for outstanding leave
- Payments for international travelling/subsistence allowance for the outgoing Director to attend SPREP and CITES meetings
- Acting allowances to Mr Trinison Tari before a new Director was recruited.
- Advertising new positions under the approved DEPC structure
- Purchasing computers for new staff
- Servicing the DEPC office vehicle
- Purchasing a new office vehicle suitable for making site assessments
- Building repairs for the new DEPC office space, including payments for contractors
- Payments for panel members selected to sit on interview panels for the new positions under the DEPC structure
- Payments towards overtime for the Department of Lands IT staff whom had committed extra hours to upgrade the network connection for DEPC at George Pompidou Building
- Facilities hire of for the validation of the NWMS.

DEPC had overspent some budget lines in 2016:

- Equipment and repairs and maintenance were purchased over the budgeted amount
- Catering costs for meetings were more than the amount budgeted for
- More stationery was purchased for workshops and office use
- More was spent on advertising positions due to the need to readvertise the positions of Director Compliance Officer
- Expenses on subsistence allowance as part of international travels.

In relation to other budget lines:

- The water budget line was not spent as bills were met by Ministry of Lands whilst DEPC was still located at George Pompidou
- Electricity payments were committed only to outstanding bills of the new office location and installation of a new electrical meter so DEPC will be meeting its future costs
- Fuel was well spent
- Little was spent on cleaning utilities for the office
- Postage payments were made only once a year so a lot of funds remained in this budget line
- Budget lines for communications were well spent
- Budget lines for local travel was well spent.
- ¼ of the VAT budget line was spent.
- No funds were committed towards special allowances, vehicle hire, other rentals, DEPC staff uniforms, overhead expenses and equipment replacements.

All the over expensed budget lines and unbudgeted items had to be absorbed from funds within the unspent budget and other budget lines. Overall, the budget met priority obligations for DEPC. A big saving that contributed to being able to meet this obligation was the money allocated to meet salary costs for new positions under the new DEPC Structure. The positions were not filled in until November and December 2016. Therefore, a lot of savings established from the payroll and were able to be transferred to the operations budget to commit payments for new office vehicle and payment to outstanding contributions to international Conventions such as SPREP, Convention on Biological Diversity and CITES.

As mentioned above, the Administration and Finance officer and Driver and Messenger were involved in other activities outside their job descriptions. This was due to both a shortage of staff and the opportunity for capacity building of the two officers.

The Driver and Messenger was involved in LFA activities as part of the GEF-PAS IAS project under the Biodiversity and Conservation Division and conducted the following activities in collaboration with project stakeholders and representatives from Biosecurity Vanuatu and the Department of Forests:

- Invasive species survey (collection and inventory of invasive species on Tanna, Aneityum, Malekula, Efata, Santo and Gaua). The data collected was incorporated into a National Invasive Species Database designed by CNS and Live and Learn.
- Delivered training in LFA eradication using specific chemicals supplied by Ezy Kill to the local communities on piloted sites on Santo, Efate and Gaua.
- Helped in facilitating orders of chemicals to eradicate *Meremia peltata* and Indian Mynah Bird on Santo, Tanna and Gaua through Ezy Kill.

The Driver and Messenger also provided assistance to the Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment Division in carrying out assessments on proposed development sites.

The Finance and Administration Officer was involved in activities under the National Ozone Unit within DEPC. In particular, providing financial reports to UNEP for the VAN IP project in order to receive the final funding for VAN IS phase V; and working with the former Ozone Officer, Mrs Anna Bule, and refrigerant technician, Ben Hambi, to organize the National ODS Alternative Survey. The Finance and Administration Officer was responsible for organising logistics for the surveys and for looking after volunteers during the survey. Surveys were conducted in Port Vila, Santo and Malekula. The Administration and Finance Officer was also responsible for data entry, collecting and compiling information for reporting.

7. Challenges

The DEPC continues to be housed in the George Pompidou Building, away from the rest of the MCCA (located in Nambatu). This pre-Independence hospital converted into office space and largely used by the Ministry of Lands was condemned for use after the earthquake in 2004. Moving the DEPC to the MCCA ground is not only an issue of more effective administration and professional collaboration but

also one of organisational justice. In 2016 work commenced on relocating the DEPC office however the process has been time consuming.

The DEPC operational budget for 2016 increased from 2015. However, a number of budget lines were overspent. Improved budgeting processes need to be implemented. This should improve in 2017 with the recruitment of a Senior Officer (Administration, Finance and Support Services) and improved business planning. However, DEPC continues to operate on a small budget – it is impossible for DEPC to implement all of the activities listed in the Business Plan and associated staff work plans with such a limited budget.

Staffing within DEPC was also a challenge in 2016. In particular, acting arrangements were in place for the Director's position for the majority of 2016. Backfilling of positions was not progressed. These human capacity issues placed increasing responsibility and an increased workload on the remaining DEPC staff and raised leadership challenges. As a result, a number of activities in the 2016 Business Plan were delayed or postponed. A particular challenge was the absence of a Compliance Officer and the difficulty in recruiting a suitably qualified person.

Staffing issues also made 2016 a really challenging year for the Environmental Protection Division. A key issue was staffing at both the DEPC and the local government authorities (Municipal and Provincial Councils). Waste management and pollution control is a very new topic for local government authorities. To ensure coordination is effective down to provincial and municipal levels, the DEPC has to prepare resource materials to disseminate information and raise awareness about waste management. Staffing levels within all of these organisations needs to be sufficient to ensure effective coordination from the DEPC. A lot of technical activities still need to be implemented to ensure the country meets its commitments and obligations under different MEAs, is able to effectively implement the Waste Management Act, the Pollution Control Act and the NWMS and is able to progress the ratification of the Basel Convention (control of transboundary movement of hazardous waste) and the Rotterdam Convention (prior informed consent for hazardous chemical and pesticides in international trade). Ratification of these conventions will allow the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu to access additional funding opportunities to implement waste management activities at the national level.

Appendix

