

Policy Implementation: Land Use & Policy

**19 November 2015, Mendana Hotel,
Honiara, Solomon Islands**

Soil conservation, Access to Land, Land Use Planning and Land Tenure

- Agriculture involves the use of natural resources – land
- Land has to be managed to sustain agricultural production
- Environmental damage must be kept to a minimum when land is used for farming – crops & livestock
- Nutrients removed from the soils must be replaced
- Forests removed must be replanted
- Soil degradation and overgrazed must be reversed back to its original form

Soil conservation, Access to Land, Land Use Planning and Land Tenure ... Continue

- Customary land tenure system controls about 85 percent of the total land area in the Solomon Islands
- The current traditional system of land ownership provides a welfare safety net for the vast majority of Solomon Islanders
- Also supports the country's robust village-based subsistence farming
- At the same time a major constraint that hampers economic development and integrated land use management and planning
- Mobilizing land for large-scale economic projects is a problem, costly and uncertain due to often multiple disputes arise between owners and developers, or different landowner groups

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- Solomon Islands now have a coherent rural land use policy
- Must be regularly consulted because it is invaluable roadmap, directing towards more effective solutions to land issues affecting agriculture development – land disputes and land use planning (zoning)
- The legal framework for land management needs to be reviewed
- Land matters are covered under the Lands and Title Act of 1970
- The Act is inadequate, outdated and does not meet the additional burden population growth and globalization has put on the land

Policy Statements / Focused Activities

1. In collaboration with other relevant Ministries provide community based land use training for rural and resources owners
2. Develop land tenure rights to minimize the long-drawn out procedure of acquisition of land and secure land titles for agricultural development
3. Careful considerations of challenges posed by the complexities of customary land tenure, and determine viable mechanisms for a more integrated and effective system of land use and management
4. Protection of Agriculture Opportunity Areas (AOA) from other indiscriminate and competing commercial interests: and easy access to land for agricultural development
5. Support the establishment of a Land Reform Commission under the Ministry of Lands, to draw up appropriate legislation to ensure that all new leases are signed with special conditions attached to protect agriculture leases against competing interests

Policy Statements / Focused Activities...Continue

6. Facilitate the customary landowner's engagement in dialogues with other stakeholders from government, the private sector, and the civil society, to develop workable partnerships in land use
7. Promote crop and livestock husbandry practices that conserve natural resources, enhance soil fertility and sustain production
8. In collaboration with other relevant institution will assess land potential for zoning and prepare land use plans as well as land capability and carrying capacity in various areas will be determined to prevent land degradation, soil erosion, depletion of water resources, and encroachment on forests
9. Increase productivity through use of improved technology to lessen pressure on land.
10. Develop soil and land use database utilizing GIS

Conclusion

- The agricultural sector is inextricably intertwined with the rest of the economy
- Measures to improve performance in the sector have implications at macroeconomic level and for other sectors
- The MAL will strive to strengthen linkages and coordination with other Ministries which deal with issues which directly or indirectly affect sector development
- Priority Areas include: Environment, Climate change, Land use, Credit availability and food safety.

Hem nomoa Thank you tumas !

- Questions & answers?