

OUR ENVIRONMENT OUR HERITAGE

PRESERVE AND CONSERVE

WATER
RESOURCES

Reducing Vulnerabilities in Pacific ACP States

Flood risk assessment, Developing of flood management guidelines and Flood Risks Reduction Action Plan

The second phase of the Samoa/SOPAC EDF 8 project occurred during the month of November 2006 for a period of 3 weeks at the Conference Room of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE), in Matautu Tai, Apia, Samoa.

This 2nd phase proceeded with fine tuning the hydrological river model of the Lower Vaisigano that had been put together during the first training phase in July. Also included in the second trip was the development of the Flood Management Guidelines for Samoa and Flood Risk Reduction Action Plan, specifically for the Lower Vaisigano catchment.

The project was two tiered to address aspects of data collection and analysis during the first phase and the actual producing of the Lower Vaisigano hydrological river catchment model. This model was then finetuned during the second phase of the project, during which time, there was also a workshop to consult with stakeholders on the development of the Flood Management Guidelines and Flood Risk Reduction Action Plan.

The project team comprised of core staff of the MNRE, specifically the Meteorology Division, the Water Resources Division and PUMA, a flood management expert from HR Wallingford Ltd and a team from SOPAC.

The training began on Thursday 9th November with a brief recap on Hydrology, Hydraulic modeling, floodplain mapping and an overview of data requirements for refining of the Lower Vaisigano river model. The training continued the following week beginning 13th November to the 17th.

During this time, the river model was being refined and subjected to further interrogations to determine flood levels for the different return periods for the Lower Vaisigano catchment. It was also during this training phase that the outcomes derived from the interrogation of the model were captured to form the basis and groundwork for the development of the Flood Management Guidelines and the Flood Risk Reduction Action Plan. Also taken into consideration were the structural and non structural mitigation options for the Lower Vaisigano catchment.

The week beginning 20th November and the 21st was devoted to the consultation workshop where all relevant stakeholders were invited to the two half-day event to be involved in the discussions leading up to the development of the Guidelines and Action Plans. Representatives from the different organisations who were present during the consultation workshops were able to participate in and contribute to the development process.

The remainder of the week after the consultation workshop was purely devoted to consolidating information from the two-day workshop into the formulation of the Action Plan Matrix and also contributing to the Guideline document. The core team from the MNRE who had been involved from Phase I were again tasked with the development of the draft documents which will be circulated to the relative Divisions within the ministry for further consultation and dialogue.

URBAN
MANAGEMENT

OUTDOOR ADVERTISING SIGNAGE POLICY

The Planning and Urban Management Board together with its Sub-committee are at its final stages of approving an Outdoor Advertising Signage Policy. This policy will apply to all developments of advertising structures on land in Samoa. The policy was developed to provide government authorities, public and private developers, designers and property owners some assistance in determining appropriate signage that will improve the streetscapes and landscapes in Samoa.

Therefore the purpose of this policy is to:

- provide for the orderly displays of signs in Samoa;
- enable permanent and temporary signs to be erected, maintained and removed in a way that mitigate adverse environmental effects;
- ensure that signs do not pose a threat to community health and safety, and the safe and efficient functioning of the road network; and
- mitigate the adverse visual effects of sign/s on amenity values of the surrounding area.

This policy will provide opportunities for advertising signs in specific areas in Samoa as well as encouraging signage that respects the character of an area and avoids visual clutter. It will also determine development consent application for signs. It is the Agency's intention that all applicants will consider this policy before deciding on any application for an outdoor advertising sign. An approved copy of this policy will be available at the PUMA office Vaiala.



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SAMOA'S ENVIRONMENT

LAND
MANAGEMENT

VALUATION OF LANDS IN SAMOA

Valuation Section - MNRE

Valuation profession was first practiced in Samoa back in 1970s under the Department of Lands, Surveys & Environment currently known as the Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment & Meteorology. It was originally introduced for the statutory purposes on government lands, customary and freehold lands. These included the provision of valuation assessment and advice to the government on matters regarding the following:

- Compensation for lands compulsorily acquired by government for public purposes
- Valuation of government lands and assets
- Leases on governments lands - (Lessor & Lessee Interest)
- Land exchange of customary lands for public developments

However, due to the increasing demand for this particular service, the Ministry has also extended its valuation services to include the lending institutions, independent corporations and the general public. These provisions include the following:

- Mortgage valuation
- Insurance assessment
- Stamp duty
- Buying & selling of lands
- Rental assessments
- Compensations
- Plant & machinery

Types of Properties we Value

- Land and improvements on:
- Residential properties
 - Commercial properties
 - Industrial properties
 - Customary lands

Procedures of Processing Valuation Reports

- All applicants can either apply in writing to the CEO or fill in an Official Valuation Request Form from Valuation Section
- All applicants must submit all Legal Descriptions of their properties
- Valuation staff will conduct inspections of the said properties
- Valuation reports will be completed within 3 days from inspection date
- Full payments of fees should be paid before you uplift your report

Standard Valuation Fees

- 1/4 acre vacant land - a minimum of \$200 to \$300 depending on its current use
- Land with improvements - a minimum of \$400 depending on the size of the property, amount of improvements to be assessed, accessibility of the property and time required for field inspection, research and compilation.

What's new??

Valuation Legislation:

- Development of the Valuation Legislation to guide and monitor the valuation practice and

industry in Samoa

- Under this legislation, a valuation report must accompany every Deeds of Conveyances for ascertaining the stamp duty amount
- Aims to control the competency of those who should be practicing as valuers by issuing Valuation Licenses and Annual Practised Certificates every year
- Strengthen the valuation policies and code of ethics for all valuers

Formulation Valuation System of Samoa - FVS

- Establishment of the very new Samoa National Formula Valuation System (FVS) Introduced by Mr. Mark McLoughlan (a land valuation adviser under the IAMP project)

What is a Formula Valuation System(FVS)?

It is a method of assessing land value of a land parcel. Uses of the FVS - for stamps duty purposes, it is guide for land value only (A catalyst).

- A guide for potential buyers and sellers
- A guide for compensation
- For valuation professions and financial sectors it is a guide to value
- It is a basis for government lands for inventory purposes

Benchmark sites - an aid to assess change in land values - whether there is a decrease or increase in land value

Updating of FVS - valuation section is responsible to update this system every year

ENVIRONMENT

THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF CETACEANS (WHALES AND DOLPHINS)

The Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Meteorology (MNREM) in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Environment Programme (SPREP) and Project JONAH WHALE RESCUE from New Zealand conducted a NATIONAL CETACEAN STRANDING TRAINING from the 4th - 7th September 2006. This was the first training of this kind ever conducted in Samoa as well as the Pacific islands region (excluding New Zealand and Australia).

The Project Jonah Whale Rescue is a New Zealand based volunteer Organization that deals with the rescue and release of stranded cetaceans. Aimed at building the capacity, expertise and consistency in response to cetaceans stranding in Samoa, the four-day long workshop taught the participants on among others, the basic means required for rescuing and releasing safely live stranded whales and dolphins back to the sea.

Stranding is simply when a whale or dolphin beach itself. It is abnormal for such marine mammals hence is a major threat to their survival as it eventually leads to death especially when there's no one on the scene to help them. The focus therefore of the MNREM as part of its current efforts for the overall conservation of the marine environment and its resources, is to conserve these marine species and one means is by at least respond when they strand.

Cetaceans do strand in and around Samoa's marine environment. The MNREM responded to 3 stranding occurrences respectively reported from Lau'i'i (2002), Lotofaga (April 2005) and Fusi Safata (December 2005) during which the whales were discovered already dead as no one was present at the time to rescue.

Dealing with such events highlights the needs for a more coordinated response hence

prompts the establishment of the currently existing National Stranding Response Committee which constitutes of representatives from some relevant government Ministries, the public Sector and the local communities.

While the MNREM is working on a Stranding Manual for Cetaceans in the country, it takes with pride the fact that Samoa is well ahead in the Pacific islands region in its initiatives for cetacean conservation.

YOU CAN HELP US SAVE AND PROTECT OUR WHALES AND DOLPHINS. PLEASE CALL THE MNREM ON PHONE NUMBER 30100 IF YOU SEE A STRANDED WHALE OR DOLPHIN.

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 SamoaTel
Family first