

**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF)
UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)
SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME (SPREP)**

**THE INTERNATIONAL WATERS PROJECT IMPLEMENTING THE
STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME (SAP) FOR THE INTERNATIONAL
WATERS OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING
STATES**

**THIRD MULTIPARTITE REVIEW
[Apia, Samoa]
8 – 9 July, 2004-07-12**

COUNTRY OPENING STATEMENT – VANUATU

Mr Chairman,
UNDP Representative,
Director of SPREP,
Government Officials,
IWP National Coordinators,
Project Coordinating Unit,
Invited Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Vanuatu welcomes the progress of the IWP thus far, both at the regional and national levels. Eventhough, Vanuatu only started the implementation of the project during the fourth quarter of 2002, there have been progress undertaken during the period that we have been participating I the project. The lists of specific activities and achievements for 2003, since the MPR in Tonga have already been highlighted in the National Coordinators report which is available at this meeting.

Mr. Chairman, the road that Vanuatu has taken to where the project status is now at, particularly, when the National Task Force were at a cross road to agree on which of the focal issues for Vanuatu to trial out. All the focal issues were areas of importance to an island country like Vanuatu, but unfortunately time would allow for us to trial all specific focal issues during the period of IWP, and with the specific interests in the coastal and fisheries sector, the NTF agreed to trial fishery and freshwater focal issues.

Mr. Chairman, on the issue of scholarship opportunity, Vanuatu has identified a candidate, but there have been problems in the candidate identifying a suitable time to be able to organise with an institution at which the scholarship was to have been undertaken.

The report of the National Coordinator has provided the reason eloquently. Vanuatu's concern to the process of the scholarship is that the PCU through SPREP, should be responsible for organising the scholarship with the regional universities before asking NCs to identify candidates for the scholarship. This should then expedite and enhance the smooth entry of candidates at the identified universities. This may not be similar for other countries but, for Vanuatu this has been the problem.

The level at which the scholarship was aimed at is also unnecessary. There should be flexibilities left to the countries to decide at what level the scholarship opportunity could be undertaken.

At the community level, there is a lot going on and we will continue to strengthen what we are already doing.

Vanuatu will continue to work closely with the SPREP and PCU, UNDP and its national partners to ensure that there are integration of activities between and among on-going projects in-country.

On behalf of the Government of Vanuatu, its peoples and particularly the communities that the project is heavily involving them in the trial, I would like to thank SPREP and the staff of the PCU and UNDP for the continuous assistance rendered to Vanuatu to realize the project and its related activities in Vanuatu.

I thank you.