

CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland

Tel. +41-22-999-0170, Fax +41-22-999-0169

E-mail: asia.oceania@ramsar.org

Web: www.ramsar.org/

Nagao Wetland Fund (NWF)

Section B “Request for Funding” Form

Note. Please complete and enclose both Section B.1 “Project Summary and Endorsement Form” and Section B.2 “Detailed Project Proposal”, following the section structure and guidance provided below on what to include in each section of the proposal. Thank you.

Section B.1 Project Summary and Endorsement Form

Please fill in sections a, b, c, f, g, h and i, and either section d or section e.

a. Country requesting support: Vanuatu

Title of project proposal: Promoting wise use of Lake Letas Community Conservation Area, a proposed Ramsar Site on Gaua Island, Vanuatu, through community-based ecotourism development

b. Category of assistance requested (please consult the Operational Guidelines and indicate one option only):

Contracting Parties:

Implementation of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024. Please indicate relevant Goals and Targets (s):

Vanuatu is in the process of joining the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. This project will contribute to:

Ramsar Strategic Goal 2: Effectively Conserving and Managing the Ramsar Site Network

- Target 5: The ecological character of Ramsar Sites is maintained or restored, through effective planning and integrated management;

Ramsar Strategic Goal 3: Wisely Using All Wetlands

- Target 11: Wetland functions, services and benefits are widely demonstrated, documented and disseminated

Please fill in **either** section **d** or section **e** below:

d. If the financial support sought from the NWF is requested to carry out part of a larger project, please indicate:

- Title of the main project:

- Duration of the main project:
 - Total cost of the main project:
 - Amount requested from the NWF:
 - Have the main project and the other funds been approved: Yes No
 - If yes, please indicate the sources of these funds, showing whether the source is in-country or external:
- e. If the proposed project is a stand-alone activity, please indicate:
- Duration of the activities to be covered by NWF grant: 12 months
 - Amount requested from the Ramsar NWF: USD 18,000
 - Other financial contributions (including in-kind) – indicate whether these are from in-country or external sources: In-kind contributions such as time of the staff of Vanuatu Government to support the implementation of project
- f. Name, address (including phone/fax numbers and e-mail address) and website of the recipient agency, i.e. the institution responsible for the project, specifying the name and contact details of the person responsible for preparing and executing the project.

Eco-Livelihood Development Association Inc, National NGO

Name: Rolenas Tavue Baereleo

Contact details: P.O.Box 3597, Port Vila, Vanuatu

Emails: ecolifeassociates@gmail.com r.tavue@gmail.com.

- g. Summary (maximum 500 words)
Describe background, justification, objectives and intended follow-up. Indicate if the project will be carried out in a Ramsar site(s) or how it otherwise contributes to the implementation of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024 and the fulfillment of its objectives:

Vanuatu is in the process of joining the Ramsar Convention. Lake Letas on Gaua Island, the largest lake in the Pacific region outside of New Guinea, was identified by Vanuatu government as their first Wetland of International Importance.

The landowners at Lake Letas area are very keen to preserve their natural environment and already set up a Community Conservation Area that is in the process of being registered as an officially protected area under Vanuatu national legislations. Eco-livelihood Development Association Inc has helped the landowners develop a management plan for the Community Conservation Area and implement some of crucial components such as raising awareness among local communities on Gaua Island about Tilapia and setting up information boards warning against deliberate or accidental Tilapia introduction to the Lake and associated wetland ecosystems.

The local communities are supportive of taking the conservation of Lake Letas into the next level and designating it as a Ramsar Site. The Ramsar Information Sheet for Lake Letas Community Conservation Area has already been prepared by the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation jointly with Eco-Livelihood Development Association Inc. By becoming a Ramsar Site, the communities hope that Lake Letas will attract more overseas tourists that will, in turn, benefit their livelihoods and enable increased funding for conservation

Nagao Wetland Fund Guidelines 2016-2024, page 3

activities at the site. This project will aim to provide technical and financial support to the local communities in developing attractive and cost effective eco-tour products at Lake Letas and promoting these products to a range of potential customers. The project will also aim to ensure that the communities have adequate capacity to offer enjoyable and educational tours as well as adequate facilities such as safe and well-maintained hiking trails, information boards and signage.


- h. Endorsement of this project application by the Ramsar Administrative Authority:**
Please confirm the importance of this proposed project in relation to your national Ramsar Convention implementation priorities. **Please tick (✓) only one of the following statements:**

1. The project's outcomes will deliver significantly increased implementation capacity for a high national priority.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OR	
2. The project's outcomes will deliver increased implementation capacity for a lower national priority.	<input type="checkbox"/>
OR	
3. The project's outcomes will not directly lead to increased implementation capacity.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Institution/Agency: Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation

Name/Title: Donna Kalfatak/Principal Officer Biodiversity and Conservation

Date: 07/04/2017

Signature: 



Please return this form along with the Detailed Project Proposal to:
Nagao Wetland Fund (NWF), Ramsar Convention Secretariat,
28 Rue Mauverney, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland. Fax: +41 22 999 0169, E-mail: asia.occania@ramsar.org

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Section B.2

Structure and contents of Detailed Project Proposal

Notes:

- i) Please follow the section headings and sequence and the guidance for what to include in each section.
- ii) Please use a maximum of **five (5) pages** (A4 size paper) to provide detailed information on your proposal, following the headings and instructions given below. Please do not use margins of less than 1.5 cm, and do not use letters smaller than 10-point font size.

Details of proposal

A. Background and justification

Background information should provide basic factual and descriptive information to put the problem(s) in its local, provincial, national, or regional context, including relevant sectoral information, government objectives, policies, plans, and ongoing programmes. The amount of background information presented should be limited to what is essential to understand the current circumstances. Describe briefly the human population living in the project area and, if the project will be carried out at a certain location, the site should be described and ideally a map should be attached to show the location.

Lake Letas is a 1,971 ha freshwater lake in Torba Province, Republic of Vanuatu, on the island of Gaua, which is at the tip of a 40 km wide and 3km high stratovolcano. The Lake occupies the caldera of an active volcano and is the largest lake in the Pacific Islands region outside of New Guinea.

Lake Letas and surrounding areas are under customary ownership by local residents. In 2015, the local communities set up a Community Conservation Area with a total area of 8,523 ha that comprises the entire catchment of the lake, as well as of its outflow, Solomul River (another name is Lusal River), where it meets the sea. The local communities are willing to take the conservation of Lake Letas to the next level and designate it as a Ramsar Site hoping that such step will help them promote ecotourism at the lake to benefit their livelihoods as well promote research activities to better understand the ecology of the lake and associated ecosystems.

Thus, the Lake Letas CCA is poised to become the country's first Wetland of International Importance ('Ramsar Site') when Vanuatu joins the Convention. Eco-lifelihood Development Association Inc, a national NGO, has completed all the technical work necessary for designating the area as a Ramsar site.

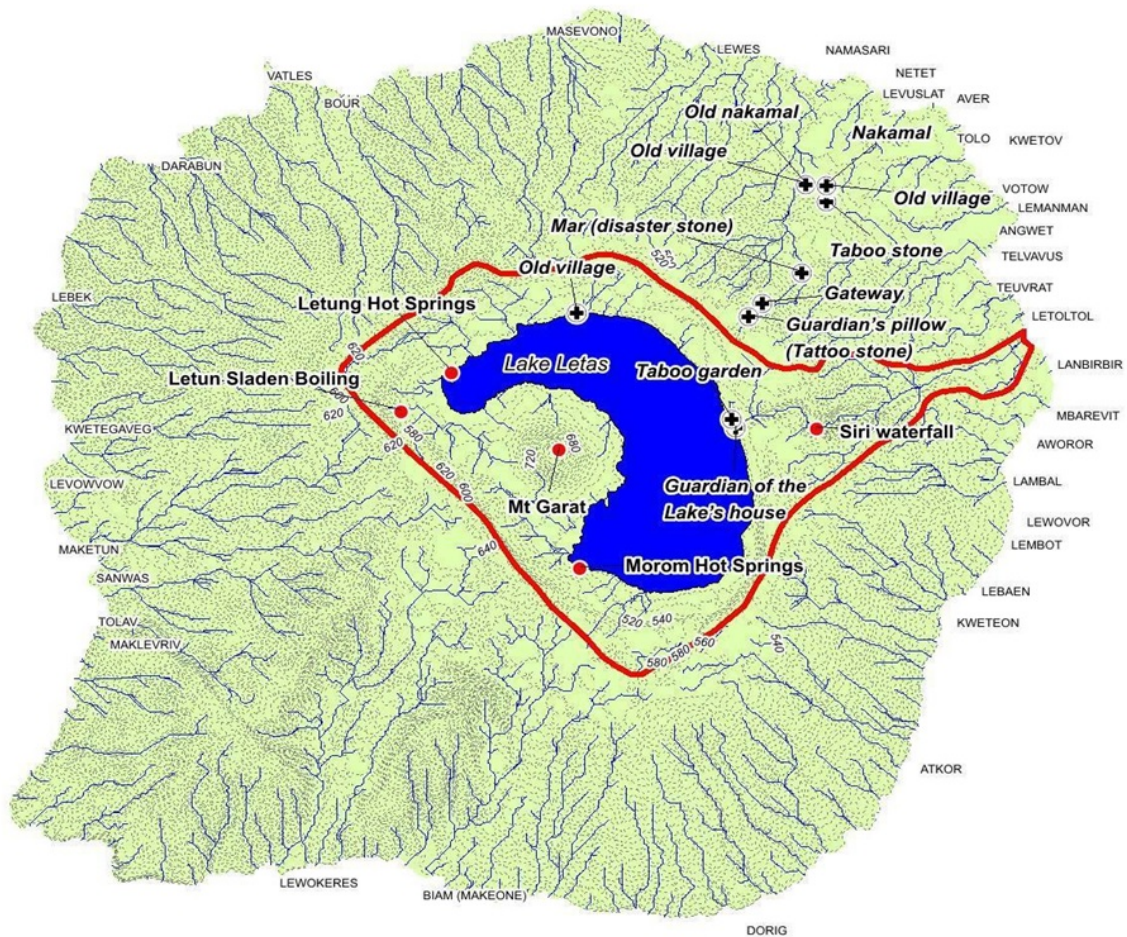
To support the local communities' efforts to promote ecotourism in Lake Letas area, hence, the future Ramsar Site, the Eco-lifelihood Development Association Inc would like to apply for Nagao Wetland

Fund for financial resources for product development and marketing, training of local guides, and improved accessibility of the key natural features of the site.

Currently, natural features within the CCA such as Lake Letas, the Garet Volcano and Siri Waterfalls, and associated hiking and trekking trails support small, local eco-tourism businesses. Also, Gaua Island villages hold a number of traditional festivals. For example, Namasari Village holds an annual event with cultural performances and stories that honor specific sites of cultural and ecological significance including the Garet Volcano and Siri Waterfalls. Gaua Island is not far from Santo Island and is relatively easy and inexpensive to visit by regular passenger flights. Basic infrastructure to support tourism such as local airport, lodges/bungalows, catering and telecommunications are available.

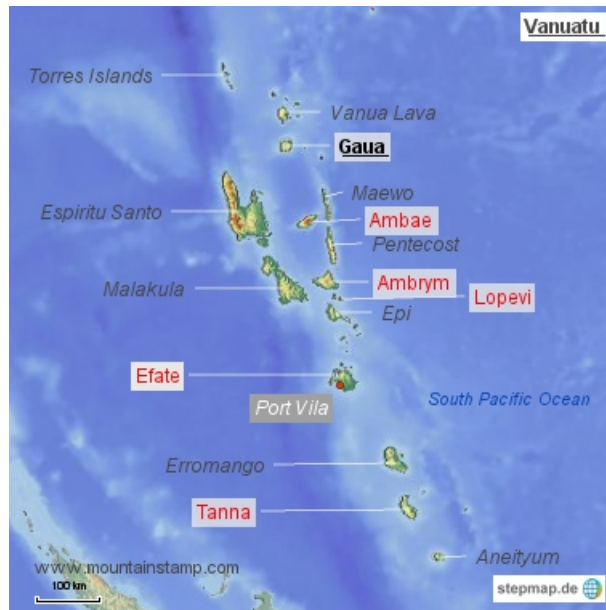
In addition, the Lake Letas Community Conservation Area is managed by a Management Committee which comprises seven members who broadly represent the landowners and other stakeholders of the CCA; it has authority to monitor and enforce adherence to community-endorsed conservation and resource use rules of the CCA. Thus, there is a good potential to build upon this existing management structure and develop community-based ecotourism activities.

Key Features of the Lake Letas Community Conservation Area proposed Ramsar Site



Legends:

-  Lake Letas
-  Proposed Ramsar Site boundary
-  Archaeological sites
-  Features of interest
-  Rivers



B. The problem(s) to be addressed

In this section identify the problem(s) that can usefully be addressed by this project and covered by the objectives described in section C. Determine the underlying causes of the problem(s) and the aspects that can be addressed by this proposal with NWF support.

International tourism is one of the main economic mainstays of Vanuatu with international visitors' number on steady rise over the last decade. Although the number of visitors to outer islands remains small, according to Vanuatu International Visitor Survey (2015) 85 per cent of international visitors were interested to include an outer island with significant environmental and cultural attractions on a return visit. Lake Letas area with its relatively easy and low cost access by air and significant environmental and cultural values holds huge potentials to attract a higher number of visitors by developing cost effective community-based eco-tour products and to link the products to the main marketing avenues such as tour agents and hotels.

Community-based ecotourism is distinguished by the local community having substantial control over, and involvement in, the development and management of the tourism products, and a major proportion of the benefits remain within the community. The quality of interpretation is of paramount importance; within this, the value of good local guides, who know their subject and can transfer the information over in an enjoyable way, is very important. Currently, the interpretative and guide services are minimal and limited to hiking. Therefore, the project will provide a suite of necessary trainings to prepare local guides. It is also important to aid the efforts of local guides by making interpretative and educational materials such as booklets and brochures available to visitors before arrival and during the stay. Again, Vanuatu is one of the prime destinations for international tourists, in particular, from Australia and New Zealand. There are a number of localised ecotourism ventures taking place and the opportunity to learn from each other and share best practices and lessons learnt hasn't been explored sufficiently.

Poor accessibility of key natural features such as Lake Letas and Siri Waterfalls including safety and quality of trails as well as adequate shelter from rain remains to be resolved. Lack of directional and interpretative/promotional signage is another hindering factor and requires financial resources to be put in place. Thus, the project will ensure that cost effective and environmentally friendly solutions are found to improve accessibility of the key landscape features in Lake Letas area.

C. Objective(s)

General Objective(s):

Please study the Ramsar Convention Strategic Plan 2016-2024 (http://www.ramsar.org/library/field_document_type/resolutions-and-recommendations-530/field_tag_body_event/conference-of-contracting-parties-366/field_tag_body_event/cop12-punta-del-este-2015-509) and indicate the issues that are being addressed in this project, and to which Goals and Targets of the Plan they relate.

To promote wise use of Lake Letas Community Conservation Area, a proposed Ramsar Site on Gaua Island, Vanuatu, through community-based ecotourism development

Specific Objective(s):

The objective states the results to be achieved by the project. These results should address and solve the problems and issues identified in Section B. Objective statements should define the intended results that should have been achieved by the end of the project. For clarity and ease of understanding, objectives should be written in standard grammatical patterns and phrases, e.g., ...to develop the management and governance of a wetland..., ...to achieve the wise use of..., ...to raise awareness of wetland values..., ...to reinforce the capacity of institutions to..., ...to identify the wetlands..., etc.

Objective 1: Eco-tour products are developed and promoted to international visitors via a host of marketing avenues;

Objective 2: Community members have sufficient capacity and resources to manage and promote eco-tourism;

Objective 3: Signage and accessibility of key hiking and trekking sites are improved and maintained.

D. Outputs

Outputs are results or products of the project to achieve an objective. Several outputs may be necessary to enable the achievement of an objective. The vocabulary used should describe the finished products or a completed result, e.g., “a management plan”, “a feasibility study”, “trained personnel”.

- Improved understanding and knowledge on ecotourism among targeted communities
- Eco-tour products that are cost effective, promote conservation and benefit local communities by diversifying their livelihood sources
- Cost effective marketing solutions (posters, brochures, promotional website etc)
- Local guides equipped with necessary skills
- Attractive and informative materials such as a booklet on Lake Letas ecology, biodiversity, cultural and other values
- Strengthened network of community based eco-tour enterprises

- A Ramsar Site signage (once Vanuatu completes accession to Ramsar)
- Signage to aid directions, information boards
- Improved accessibility of key hiking and trekking sites

E. Activities

Explain all the activities that will be undertaken to produce each output. Explanation of the activities should be detailed and analytical so that at the end of this section the methodology of the project is clear. The vocabulary used should describe actions that will be taken, e.g., “conduct training”, “consultation with ministries”, “organize seminars”. A full description of how these activities will be carried out should be provided, including details such as, for example, the person and organization executing the activity, sampling or monitoring methodologies, types of materials to be produced, number of publications to be printed, number of people attending workshop, cost of food and accommodation, etc.

Objective 1: Eco-tour products are developed and promoted to international visitors via a host of marketing avenues:

To organize a workshop among local communities to clarify the expectations and aspirations of the landowners, develop eco-tour products, identify partners and stakeholders such as Torba Province Tourism Agency and find cost effective marketing solutions

To produce a promotional webpage

To produce and distribute promotional brochures and posters for the airport and other key sites such as tour agencies and hotels

Objective 2: Community members have sufficient capacity to manage and promote eco-tourism:

To organize a training of eco-tour guides

To produce attractive and informative materials such as a booklet on Lake Letas ecology, biodiversity, and cultural and other values, and make them easily available to tourists

To organize a tour to learn from and share experiences with other ecotourism sites in Vanuatu

Objective 3: Signage and accessibility of key hiking and trekking sites are improved and maintained:

To produce a Ramsar site signage (once Vanuatu completes accession to Ramsar);

To improve signage of key hiking and trekking sites;

To improve accessibility of key hiking and trekking sites

F. Logical frame of the project

Use the table below to summarize the activities undertaken to produce each output and to reach each objective. This table should be consistent with the paragraphs B, C, D and E above. It will be used to assess the project’s progress.

Problems	Objectives	Outputs	Activities
Lack of attractive and competitive eco-tour products despite the availability of exceptional landscape and cultural values in Lake Letas area; Insufficient level of marketing	Eco-tour products are developed and promoted to international visitors via a host of marketing avenues	Improved understanding and knowledge on ecotourism among targeted communities Eco-tour products that are cost effective, promote conservation and benefit local communities by diversifying their livelihood sources Cost effective marketing solutions	To organize a workshop among local communities to clarify the expectations and aspirations of the landowners, develop eco-tour products, identify partners and stakeholders such as Torba Province Tourism Agency and find cost effective marketing solutions To produce a promotional webpage To produce and distribute promotional brochures and posters for the airport and other key sites such as tour agencies and hotels
Insufficient capacity to offer quality local interpretative and guide services; Insufficient level of learning and networking from other sites	Community members have sufficient capacity to manage and promote eco-tourism	Local guides equipped with necessary skills A booklet on Lake Letas ecology, biodiversity, cultural and other values Strengthened network of community based eco-tour enterprises	To organize a training of eco-tour guides To produce attractive and informative materials such as a booklet on Lake Letas ecology, biodiversity, and cultural and other values, and make them easily available to tourists To organize a tour to learn from and share experiences with other ecotourism sites in Vanuatu
Poor accessibility of trails to key landscape features and lack of directional, interpretative/promotional signage	Signage and accessibility of key hiking and trekking sites are improved and maintained	A Ramsar Site signage Signage to aid directions, information boards Improved accessibility of key hiking and trekking sites	To produce a Ramsar site signage (once Vanuatu completes accession to Ramsar) To improve signage of key hiking and trekking sites To improve accessibility of key hiking and trekking sites

G. Project management arrangements and stakeholders

A plan or flow chart for management and implementation arrangements of the project should be prepared. This section should include information on the agency or body executing the project, describe institutional and technical capacities to undertake the work, and indicate the monitoring and evaluation procedures to ensure that the objectives are met. It should also include an identification of the stakeholders concerned by the project. If the implementing agency is not the Ramsar Administrative Authority, general information on the implementing agency should be provided, including details about its institutional and/or working relations with the Administrative Authority.

<u>Objective 2: Community members have sufficient capacity to manage and promote eco-tourism:</u>												
Activity 1: To organize a training of eco-tour guides												
Activity 2: To produce attractive and informative materials such as a booklet on Lake Letas ecology, biodiversity, and cultural and other values, and make them easily available to tourists												
Activity 3: To organize a tour to learn from and share experiences with other ecotourism sites in Vanuatu												
<u>Objective 3: Signage and accessibility of key hiking and trekking sites are improved and maintained:</u>												
Activity 1: To produce a Ramsar site signage (once Vanuatu completes accession to Ramsar)												
Activity 2: To improve signage of key hiking and trekking sites												
Activity 3: To improve accessibility of key hiking and trekking sites												

I. Budget

The NWF provides a maximum of US Dollars (USD) 18,000 per strategic project or activities to support projects submitted by non-Contracting Parties to assist with their accession.

Please provide the budget costs in **your local currency and converted to US Dollars (USD) – but NOT in any other currency**. Please distinguish between the amounts to be covered by the NWF grant and by counterpart funding (if any). If there is counterpart funding, please indicate whether the funds have been secured and, if so, from which organization these funds will come. Also, distinguish clearly between counterpart funds coming from, or proposed to come from, sources within and from outside the country.

In this section a detailed budget, consistent with the previous sections, in particular with the activities described, should be presented. All items (especially salary costs) for which support is requested from the NWF must be justified in the activity section. Please include unit costs (e.g., monthly salaries, number of copies and unit cost of publications, etc.) where appropriate. Present the budget for a one-year period: the NWF contribution should be spent during a one-year period, in line with the work plan provided.

In addition to the cash funds in the budget, please also provide additional information in this section of the project proposal about any additional “in-kind” contributions to the project (e.g., provision of office accommodation, provision of technical equipment, work time of personnel paid from other sources, etc.).

Use the format below for the project budget tables.

i) ***Budget summary***

This proposal is a sample for your reference and budget information has been removed from this version of the proposal.

ii) ***Overall itemized budget***

J. Follow Up

After the project is over, Eco-livelihood Development Association Inc will handover results to the Department of Environment Protection and Conservation as the Focal Point for Ramsar Convention and responsible for Community Conservation Areas. The government as well as Eco-livelihood Development will seek to replicate best practices of the project such as innovative and cost effective eco-tour products to other similar areas suitable for ecotourism development.

K. Bibliography

Please list key references.

WWF International (2001), Guidelines for Community-based Ecotourism Development

International Finance Corporation & New Zealand Tourism Research Institute (2015), Vanuatu International Visitor Survey Factsheet

IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (2016), Policy Matters, Issue 20

Department of Environment Protection and Conservation (2017), Ramsar Information Sheet for Lake Letas proposed Ramsar Site (draft).