



FOLUR
Food Systems • Land Use • Restoration
PAPUA NEW GUINEA



Establishing Systems for Sustainable Integrated Land Use Planning across New Britain Island in Papua New Guinea

GEF 7 - FOLUR PROJECT



GEF 6 and GEF 7 - FOLUR Project staff with Director CEPA's Director for Sustainable Environment Programs Division, Kay Kalim and CEPA's Manager for Marine Protected Areas, Bernard Surman during Adam's farewell.

January: Team bids goodbye to Adam

The year started off with the Project team and its stakeholders bidding farewell to Adam Starr, who has served as the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) for over two and a half years.

Reflecting on his time in Papua New Guinea (PNG), Adam expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the partnerships and progress made during his tenure.

He played a crucial role in advancing the sustainability of PNG's Cocoa and Palm Oil sectors through the project. He also actively supported the National Biodiversity Targets for the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), a key roadmap guiding PNG's environmental efforts until 2030. Additionally, he was instrumental in shaping the GEF8

Blue Green Islands Project, which aims to bring much-needed resources to New Ireland and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville.

In his parting message, Adam extended his heartfelt thanks to all stakeholders for their engagement with UNDP and their commitment to sustainable development.



DLPP's Acting Principal Planner Research and Information, Wendy Wahe talking to participants during the stakeholder consultation.

January - February: Stakeholder consultations advance sustainable land use planning

From 31 January to 15 February 2025, stakeholder consultations were held in East and West New Britain Provinces by the Project team, Finnish Overseas Consultants (FinnOC), Conservation and Environment Protection Authority (CEPA), and Department of Lands and Physical Planning (DLPP).

Representatives from provincial administrations and district authorities discussed strategies for sustainable land use planning and conservation.

Key discussions and objectives

Developing Sustainable Land Use Policies: Stakeholders contributed to regulations at the ward, LLG, district,

and provincial levels.

Scenario Planning: Using High Conservation Value (HCV) and High Carbon Stock (HCS) mapping, participants explored land development scenarios.

Targeted Scenario Analysis (TSA): Evaluated 'business-as-usual' versus 'sustainable environmental management' approaches for informed decision-making.

Enhancing Multi-Sector Collaboration: Strengthened cross-sectoral engagement in sustainable land-use planning.

Expected outcomes and next steps
Stakeholder Consultation Reports:

Documenting input from all governance levels.

Refined Land Use Frameworks: Aligning with provincial and national development goals.

Strengthened Governance: Enhancing decision-making mechanisms for sustainable land management.

These consultations mark a crucial step in balancing conservation and development in New Britain. The Project's continued engagement ensures that land-use planning aligns with national sustainability priorities while supporting local livelihoods.

February: CEFI conducts financial literacy survey for farmers



Mapping exercise in Silanga, West New Britain Province during the TNA.

The Centre for Excellence in Financial Inclusion (CEFI) in support of the project and the Conservation and Environment Protection Authority (CEPA), has completed a Financial Literacy Training Needs Assessment (TNA) for smallholder farmers in East

and West New Britain Provinces from 2–15 February 2025.

The survey aimed to identify financial challenges and opportunities for farmers reliant on cash transactions and informal savings.

Key Findings

Financial Exclusion: Many farmers operate outside the formal banking system.

Limited Savings Culture: Despite earning income, structured savings remain low.

High Cost of Living: Population growth within farming blocks strains finances.

Youth Engagement: Strong youth participation signals interest in financial literacy.

Gender Inclusion: Women comprised 37.5% of participants which was in line with the minimum requirements of 30% from the Gender Action Plan. However, there is room for greater female participation.

Empowering Farmers with Financial Training

In response, CEFI will deliver financial literacy training in April 2025 to 140

To page 3...

February: Strengthening Conservation and Sustainable Agriculture

From 6–9 February 2025, UNDP's GEF Regional Technical Advisor, Tashi Dorji, and Nature Pledge Coordinator, Sean Lees, visited West New Britain Province to assess progress in protected area management, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable land-use initiatives.

Supporting PNG's Protected Areas

Under the GEF 6 project, UNDP has introduced governance and financing mechanisms, including the Biodiversity Climate Fund, to sustain PNG's protected areas. The team visited the Lolobau Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA) in Kimbe Bay, home to rich marine biodiversity, where community members presented updates on conservation efforts and livelihood initiatives such as coconut oil production. The visit confirmed community ownership of conservation efforts and the need for market access to sustain initiatives.

Transforming Agricultural Landscapes

Under the GEF7-FOLUR project, UNDP supports sustainable agricultural practices. The team met with OPIC



GEF RTA, Tashi Dorji speaking to villagers at Lolobau Island, West New Britain Province.

officials and smallholder farmers at a demonstration block in East Nakanai to discuss best management practices, training needs, and further collaboration opportunities.

Building Partnerships for Lasting Impact

A key outcome was strengthening collaboration with the West New Britain Provincial Administration, OPIC, and the Wildlife Conservation Society to ensure sustainability

beyond project timelines. PNG's selection as a Nature Pledge pilot site highlights its global significance in biodiversity conservation.

These efforts reinforce PNG's commitment to balancing environmental sustainability with economic growth through strengthened partnerships, innovative conservation strategies, and sustainable agricultural practices.

February: Supporting extension services for smallholder Oil Palm farmers

A recent mission under the Project aims to transform extension services for smallholder oil palm farmers by developing practical materials to enhance technical knowledge and promote sustainability.

Key Activities and Findings

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Meetings with NBPOL, Hargy, OPRA, OPIC, and sustainability representatives gathered insights on improving extension methods.
- **Identifying Gaps:** The team assessed training needs, particularly for women and youth, and identified challenges like literacy barriers, land ownership issues, and high farming costs.
- **Observing Practices:** Field visits

helped refine extension materials for practical use.

- **Review of Materials:** A phased approach ensured validation and improvement of training content.
- **Preferred Learning Methods:** Participatory learning was favored over traditional lectures.
- **Extension Officer Constraints:** Officers manage over 600 farmers each, far exceeding the ideal 1:200 ratio, and lack standardized training.

Recommendations and Next Steps

- **Capacity Building:** Training of Trainers (ToT) in financial literacy and best management practices for extension officers.
- **PNG-Specific Materials:** Developed

with OPIC, OPRA, NBPOL, and West New Britain Provincial Administration.

- **Digital Tools:** Exploring digitalizing extension materials for better farmer access.
- **Women's Inclusion:** Increasing women extension officers to ensure inclusive support.
- **Monitoring & Feedback:** Implementing a structured mechanism to track training impact.

The Project will work in partnership with CEFI, to lead financial literacy training for farmers and extension officers, with materials finalized by August 2025.

CEFI training to help farmers manage money wisely

...from page 2

farmers, including 80 cocoa farmers in Inland Baining and Central Pomio (East New Britain) and 60 oil palm farmers in Central and East Nakanai (West New Britain). The training will focus on budgeting, savings, loans, banking services, and financial record-keeping.

This initiative aims to help farmers secure their earnings, access banking

services, and strengthen household finances. It will also promote women's financial empowerment and introduce banking agent networks in rural communities.

Overcoming Challenges for Lasting Impact

Despite progress, challenges remain, including limited banking services, unfamiliarity with digital banking, and financial pressures from growing

family sizes. However, with continued support, these barriers can be addressed over time.

The successful completion of the TNA marks a major step in enhancing financial inclusion for PNG's smallholder farmers. By equipping them with essential financial skills, this initiative supports PNG's Vision 2050, fostering economic growth, reducing poverty, and promoting sustainable livelihoods.



Cocoa Board Budder, Bosco Sali demonstrating the budding process to curious participants and onlookers.

March: Empowering Cocoa Farmers through budding innovation in Central Pomio

From 21 February to 7 March 2025, 30 farmers from six communities (Galuwe, Marmar, Pomio, Sali, Olaipun 1, and Olaipun 2) participated in an intensive cocoa budding training.

Led by six certified cocoa budders and supervised by the Cocoa Board of PNG, the training focused on improving cocoa quality and yield through budding and nursery management. Each community selected five participants (3 men and 2 women) who, upon meeting performance standards, will become certified budders, strengthening local expertise.

The Cocoa Board provided 18 cocoa clone varieties to establish budwood gardens at each training site, ensuring access to high-quality planting materials.

Donald Songavare, a research officer with the Cocoa Board, emphasized the importance of using only researched and approved cocoa clones to maintain high productivity and disease resistance.

Meanwhile, Agmark is preparing to ship nursery materials with Cocoa Board's oversight ensuring the establishment of 14 nurseries (7 in Central Pomio and 7 in Inland Baining) starting in April 2025.

Local ward members expressed enthusiasm for the initiative. Hon. William Longkale, Marmar Ward Member, highlighted the program's role in revitalizing cocoa farms and securing better incomes. Hon. Peter Mire from Galue emphasized the long-term benefits of best farming practices.

"We are impressed by the enthusiasm and dedication of the farmers. With continued support, they can significantly improve their cocoa production," said Jerry Ben, Senior Extension Officer from the Cocoa Board.

The training also included aligning budwood gardens with nursery sites, ensuring sustainable access to high-quality planting materials. With cocoa playing a vital role in the local economy, this initiative is a significant step in empowering farmers, strengthening resilience against climate and market challenges, and securing a sustainable future.



March: GIS Officers Trained on LUIMS

A dedicated team of Geographic Information System (GIS) officers from the Department of Lands and Physical Planning (DLPP) had their second phase of training on the Land Use Information Management System (LUIMS).

The training, held in March, was facilitated by Mammoth Geospatial in collaboration with the Project.

LUIMS is an innovative platform designed to promote sustainable land use planning in the country. The system has already received positive feedback from DLPP, and its official launch and handover to the department is scheduled for mid-2025.

The training session focused on information management and system administration. GIS officers from DLPP's three technical divisions—Physical Planning, Survey, and the National Mapping Bureau—are being equipped with the essential skills to manage LUIMS effectively.

This core team of officers will play a pivotal role in facilitating data sharing and management across various government agencies and stakeholders. They will also act as trainers for provincial-level officers and ensure the ongoing maintenance and operation of the system.

This training and technical support are part of Component One of the project, which ensures that DLPP is prepared to seamlessly integrate LUIMS into the national land use planning strategies. The system's integration is expected to enhance transparency, efficiency, and sustainability in land management, ultimately improving decision-making across the sector.

As the project progresses, LUIMS will play a crucial role in supporting better land use planning, offering a valuable tool for enhancing the management of land resources across PNG.