



VANUATU GOVERNMENT



Vanuatu Coconut Summit 2019

National Dialogue on

Coconut for a Better Future

30th October – 31st October 2019
Vanuatu Agriculture College - Santo

VANUATU COCONUT SUMMIT

The 1st Coconut Summit brings coconut stakeholders together to discuss strategies to enhance the contribution of the coconut sector to sustainable development and Vanuatu's "better future".

BACKGROUND

For over a century, coconuts have been an integral part of the economy of Vanuatu. To date, Vanuatu's coconut sector has been concentrated in the production of copra. Increasing value addition and product diversification, particularly for smallholder farmers, has been a long-term challenge. Coconut will continue to play a crucial role in meeting Vanuatu's developmental objective to achieve "a stable economy based on equitable, sustainable growth that creates jobs and income earning opportunities accessible to all people in rural and urban areas" by 2030.¹

One important question is whether the coconut development strategy of today is fit for purpose in light of upcoming challenges? For instance, what should be done to overcome challenges such as infrastructural weakness and lack of finance to smallholders in our effort to achieve greater value addition and diversification?² The coconut industry also needs coordinated policies addressing the following areas:

- *Investment* aligned with the objective to increase value addition and diversification;
- *Export promotion* to capitalise on the international demand and to benefit all stakeholders of the coconut industry including micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), women and youth;
- *Research and development* on coconut varieties and planting strategy for the sustainability of the coconut industry.

¹ Source: [Vanuatu 2030 – National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2030](#).

² Those challenges are identified in [Vanuatu National Coconut Strategy 2016-2025](#) and [the Vanuatu National Green Export Review](#).



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OBJECTIVE AND EXPECTED OUTCOME

The 1st Coconut Summit will gather stakeholders to discuss strategies to further develop the coconut industry in a manner that promotes sustainable export promotion and value addition with a view to contributing to Vanuatu's national vision of a "stable, sustainable and prosperous Vanuatu" by 2030.

The outcome of the Summit will be an action agenda which shall address:

- Interim evaluation of the implementation of the [Vanuatu National Coconut Strategy 2016-2025](#);
- Streamlining of initiatives and policy actions in support of the coconut industry;
- Policy coherence between the coconut industry development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- Institutional setting necessary for the sustainable development of the coconut industry;
- Steps after the 1st Coconut Summit.

DATE & VENUE

Date: 30th October – 31st October 2019

Venue: Vanuatu Agriculture College - Santo



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DAY 1 – Wednesday 30 October 2019

07h30

Registration of participants

08h30-09h15

Welcome Remarks

Secretary General, Sanma Provincial Government Council (SPGC)

Opening Remarks

- Jimmy Rantes, Director, Department of Industry, Ministry of Tourism, Trade, Industry, Commerce and Ni-Vanuatu Business (MTTCNVB)
- Video message from Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Director, division on international Trade and Commodities, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

Keynote Addresses:

Uron N. Salum, Executive Director, International Coconut Community

Hon. Minister Matai Seremaiah Nawalu, Minister for Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Bio – Security (MALFFB)

Facilitated by Alick Berry, Executive Officer, MTTCNVB

09h15-10h30

Session 1: Coconut for a Better Future - Where are we?

This session sets the scene for the Coconut Summit.

- *Progress of [Vanuatu National Coconut Strategy 2016-2025](#) and challenges facing coconut production (e.g. aging trees, rhino beetles, etc.), Mr. Antoine Ravo, MALFFB*
- *Status of coconut industry development, Mr. Jimmy Rantes, DoI, MTTCNVB*
- *Updates with the Eradication of the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle, Director Meriam Toalak, Biosecurity Vanuatu*
- *Vanuatu Intellectual Property Office (VanIPO), Brittien Yosef*

Moderated by [Ambassador Sumbue Antas, Permanent Representative of Vanuatu to UN/WTO, Geneva]

10h30-10h45

Coffee/tea

10h45-12h00

Session 2: Coconut for a Better Future - Where do we want to go?

Coconut diversification and value addition can contribute to socio-economic development of smallholders in the rural area, including youth and women. But different value-chain actors face different challenges vis-à-vis coconut diversification and value addition. This session discusses:

- *Challenges to farmers, Farmer Representative, Santo/Sanma Province*
- *Challenges to Processors, Rona Garae/ Robert Bohn*



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- *Industry experiences*, Coconut Oil Production Santo Ltd (COPSL), Vanuatu Copra Cocoa Exporters (VCCE)
- *Challenges in diversifying into a niche “organic” market*, Miho Shirotori, UNCTAD

Moderated by Dr. Sid

12h00-13h00

Session 3: Coconut for a Better Future – What do we do to support?

This session discusses existing as well as desirable support measures that will enhance the coconut industry’s contribution to a better future.

- Mr. Wensie Naki, Department of Strategic Policy Planning and Aid Coordination
- Naheed Hussein, Coconut Industry Development for the Pacific Programme (CIDP)/SPC
- *Supporting commodity diversification and value addition*, Stefan Csordas, UNCTAD

Moderated by Jimmy Rantes

13h00-14h15

Lunch

14h15-15h45

Session 4: Discussion

First 45 minutes: Participants form small groups to discuss the options put forward in Sessions 1, 2 and 3 and formulate the group’s recommendations on what actions to be taken by whom.

Remaining 45 minutes: Presentation by each group of its recommendations, followed by discussion.

Moderated by Miho Shirotori, Chief, Global and Regional Trade Analysis Section, UNCTAD

16h00-16h30

Recaps from Day 1

- Recap by Jimmy Rantes, Director, DoI, MTTCNVB
 - Comments from the ICC, Uron Salum
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DAY 2 – Thursday 31 October 2019

08h30-10h00

Session 5: Rejuvenating Coconut Production in Vanuatu

Improving coconut productivity faces numerous challenges such as aging trees and rhino-beetles. This session hears from experts on innovative approaches and actions needed to tackle the challenges.

- Rohit Lal, Principal Agriculture Officer North, Ministry of Agriculture, Fiji.
- CEO/Deputy CEO, Vanuatu Agricultural Research and Training Center (VARTC)
- Nambo Moses, POETCOM
- Eric Omuru, CIDP/SPC
- *Sustainable development of the coconut sector*, a video presentation by Jean-Pierre Labouisse, French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD)

Moderated by Peter Napwat, CEO, Vanuatu Agriculture College

10h00-10h15

Coffee/tea

10h15-11h30

Session 6: Access to Finance and Investment

Productive investment is a pre-requisite for transforming the coconut sector for better future. This session discusses investment trends and different investment sources.

- Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI)
- Raymond Vuti, Acting CEO, Vanuatu Investment Promotion Authority (VIPA)
- Sid Boubekour and Ben Tofor, VaVaC TA

Moderated by Ridley Joseph, Director, ORCBDS

11h30-12h00

Concluding Session: Adoption of the Outcome and the Way Forward

- Miho Shirotori, UNCTAD
- Jimmy Rantes, Director, DoI/MTTCVNB

12h00-13h00

Lunch

13h00-15h00

Field visit to Vanuatu Agriculture Research Training Centre