



SOLOMON ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

**Ministry Of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster
Management & Meteorology**

**PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE,
DISASTER MANAGEMENT & METEOROLOGY, Dr MELCHIOR MATAKI**

NATIONAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM

Friday, 6nd OCTOBER 2017

NATIONAL MUSEUM, HONIARA.

*Honourable Premiers of Malaita and Choiseul Provinces and delegations,
Representatives of Non-Government Organisation Community, Civil Society,
Community-based Organisations,
Community Chiefs, Leaders and Field Managers,
Representatives of the Research Community and Practioners,
Representatives of the Private Sector,
Government Officials (both at National and Provincial Levels), and
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Good Morning!

It is indeed a great honour for me to be part of you for the closing of this important occasion, this morning.

First of all, let me to acknowledge you for your time, tireless efforts and contributions to have this national resource management symposium a success. I know that you shared a lot during the week and learn from each other under the theme: **“Connecting People with Nature – A Decade of Learning”**.

I know that many of you have come afar from rural communities and spend time without your families to attend this symposium. And I hope that you have learn something new to share with your people and continue to encourage them to be good stewards and managers of our resources.

OVERALL CONCERNS & ISSUES (RAISED):

Throughout the week, there many issues has been raised are our challenges. Some of which is inherently faced by many environment concern citizens and communities of our country, some are political in nature and remains our common challenge.

- Major threats and development pressures that were faced by communities with their environment and biodiversity. (Concern with unsustainable developments like logging should be viewed as everyone's business. This should not discourage us (rural communities) from their campaign to protect their resources and manage sustainably).
- Limited presence of Government (officials) in communities to assist them with their conservation programmes. (Communities' representatives are kindly requested for their patience with the government process subjected to limited capacity and support. Call for understanding is necessary to advancing further).
- Long processes (or complication) under Protected Areas Act 2010(Reg. 2012) to register proposed PA (sea/land). (This should be viewed as opportunity and not a hindrance. Concern communities' representatives are encouraged to consult and seek clarification from responsible authorities. I want to encourage each of you to express your interest for support us and get registered).
- Limited assistance for communities with alternative livelihoods support across the country. (Given number of our communities and limited budget, the Government, NGOs and other funders are yet to finalise anything for equal disbursement for assistance to all our CBOs conservation focus).

- Concern with responsible government authorities (MECDM) in issuing development consents, assessments and monitoring of high biodiversity areas and if is complimenting conservation effort of communities. (Resource owners are responsible and have upper hand to protect these resources. Provision under the law to protect areas of national interest to be pursued and agreed with resources owners initiated by Government).
- Concern with the role (efficiency & effectiveness) of state institute(s) in this campaign. Over the decade, the establishment of MECDM is a huge achievement, with the former Prime Minister (Gordon D. Lilo) who presented on his view championing the establishment. There is a hope that positive transitioning has occurred.
- Unequal distribution of NGOs presence across the countries (in the Provinces), or more concentration in Western part of the country. (NGOs and Researchers are urged to undertake baseline studies or biodiversity assessment in other areas(Islands) as there are opportunities of discovering a new species or habitats. Eg. Wai-Hau leatherback turtle beach in Malaita).

FOCUS & OPPORTUNITIES TO BE STRENGTHEN:

- Partnership & Networking with Government ministries, NGOs, researchers, experts, & communities (assist resource owners) is important to sustain resource management and conservation. Especially the need to access fund, manage and support their alternative livelihood. Partnership design at moment is unlimited which makes it flexible for our communities already. It encouraging to expand to business and private sectors. Networking is the way forward to address many challenging issues in communities
- Community Based Resource Management (CBRM) should be the link and thriving the communities to manage their resources. This is an opportunity for the National Government through my Ministry and the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resource to reach you. It is already happening on ground and I

ask you to explore this opportunity to assist you. Communities are encouraged to take the lead (women & youths).

- Researches, Data & Information Sharing-should be driven and supported by Government policies. And vice versa research findings and results to support policies and legislation development based on scientific data and facts.
- Political will and support-is important to thrive conservation campaign in the country. The presence of Honourable Premiers and Provincial Members is an assurance to us for support at all leadership level to be raise and take this campaign to another level.

Some other general areas that needs reminder:

- Managing Expectations and Responsibility-
- Shared Responsibility-
- Taking Ownership of Resource Management-
- Holistic approaches-
- Training & Capacity Building for Resource Owner and Communities-
- Strengthening Community Governance-
- Sustainable Finance and Support-
- Investing in young generations to champion environment campaign-
- Consultation as important process in our communities especially for successful establishment of Protected Areas-
- Community Awareness and Education-
- Realisation of Resource Management(Access and equitable sharing)-

It is my hope that you find this Symposium a practical platform to **rediscover ways** to effectively and sustainably manage our natural resource for now and our future generation.

I wish you all well in your community undertakings and safe journey to your various homes and Islands. I now officially declare 2017 National Resource Management Symposium close.