

# The Pacific Experience

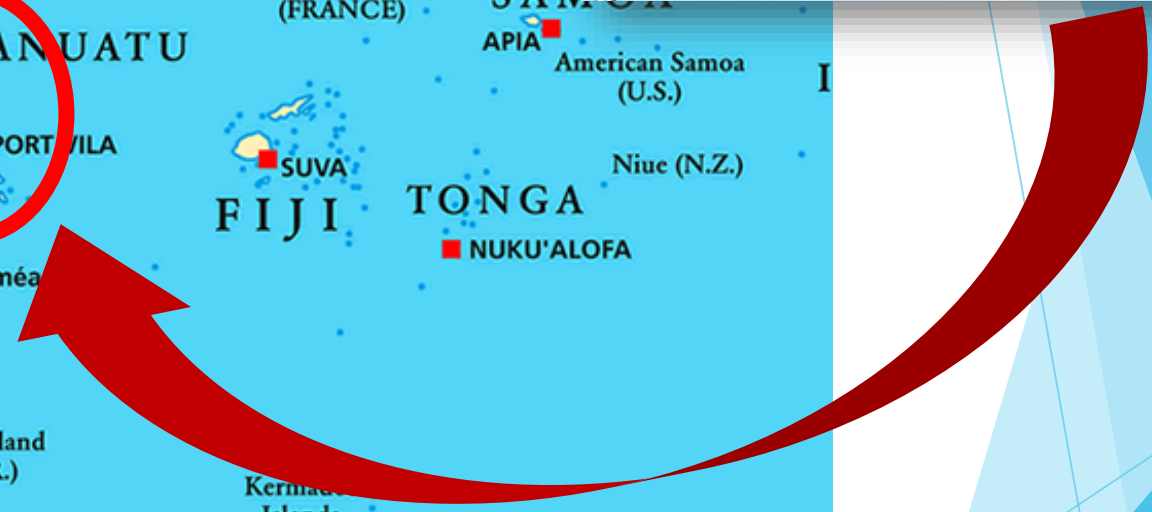
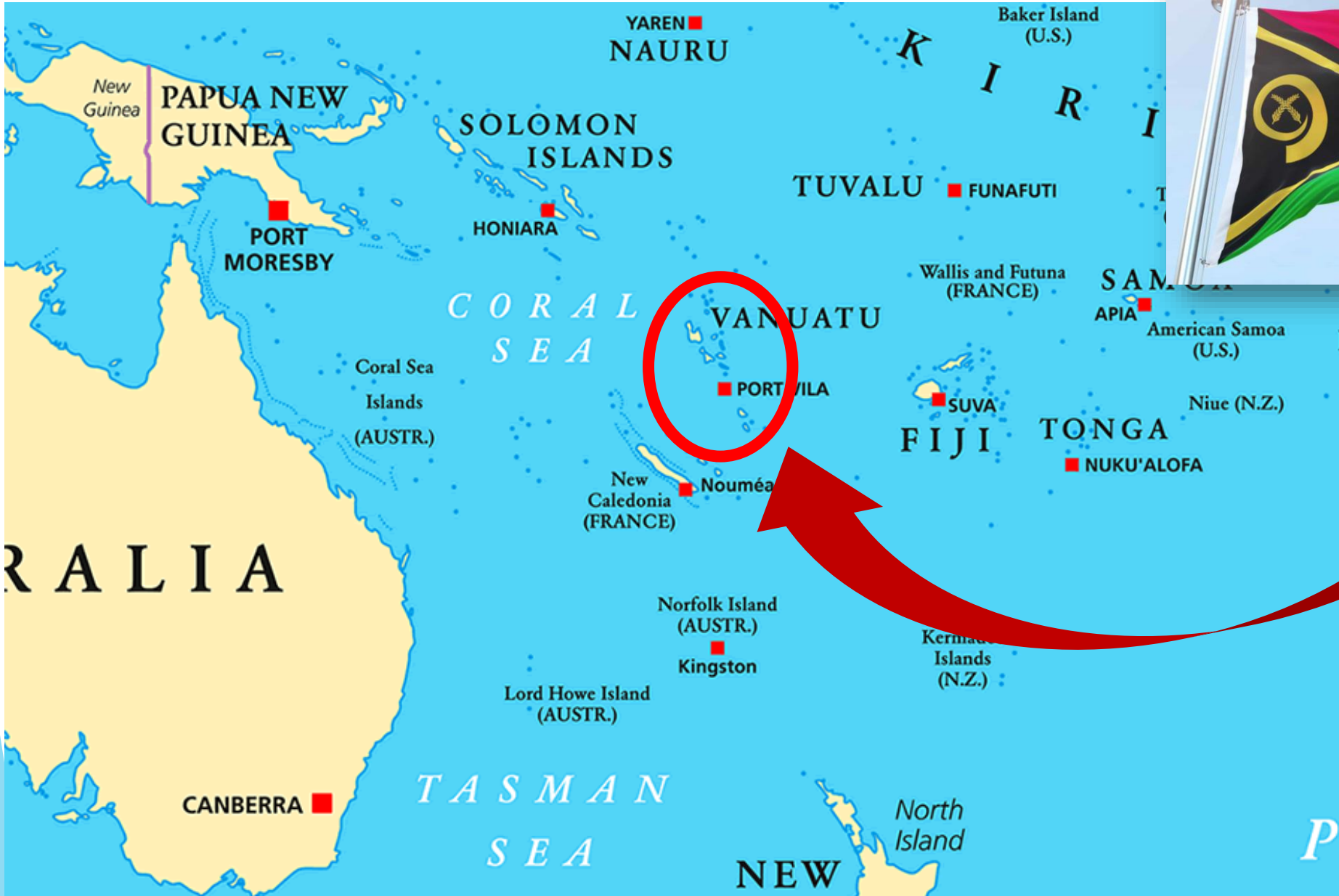


**Cooperation and Partnerships to  
Identify and Address Labour  
Standard Issues on Fishing Vessels**



# Vanuatu brief

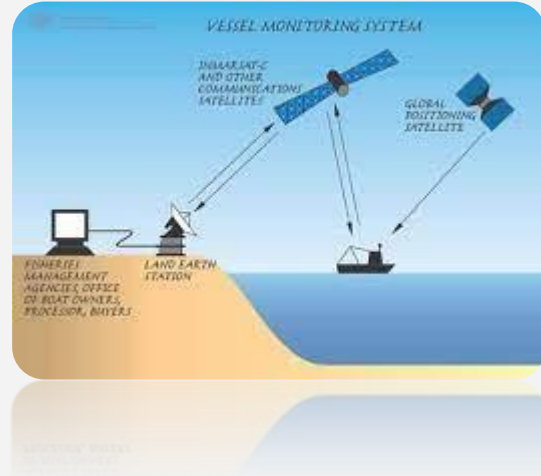
- ▶ **Status:** Independent Island state (Formerly New Hebrides under Britain and France)
- ▶ **Location:** South Pacific Ocean
- ▶ **Area:** 4,707 sq mi (12,190 sq km).
- ▶ **Population:** (2023 est.) 324,000.
- ▶ **Capital:** Port-Vila.
- ▶ **Official Languages:** Bislama, English, French;
- ▶ **Religion:** Christianity
- ▶ **Currency:** vatu
- ▶ **Economy:** Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Tourism



# MCS Tools and Assets

## National level

- ▶ VMS
- ▶ Observers
- ▶ Legislation
- ▶ Licence Conditions
- ▶ Maritime College
- ▶ Police Maritime Wing
- ▶ Vanuatu Maritime Safety Authority



## Regional and International Level

- ▶ QUAD Partners (US, France, NZ, Australia)
- ▶ FFA
- ▶ RFMO CMMs
- ▶ Agreements (NTSA, FAO PSMA)
- ▶ NGOs (Pew, Greenpeace, WWF, etc.)



RVS Takuare is a 39.5m steel monohull Guardian-class Patrol Boat

# **International Fisheries and MCS**

## **Fisheries Laws of Vanuatu**

- The Fisheries Act 10 Of 2014
- Fisheries Act(Amendment) CAP 38 of 2019
- Regulation Order 28 of 2009

## **Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs)**

- WCPFC - Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
- IATTC - Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission
- SPRFMO – South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization
- NPFC - North Pacific Fisheries Commission
- CCAMLR - Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (Acceding Member)

## **Possibility of returning**

- ICCAT
- IOTC

# Joint MCS Operations



# Issues

- Fisheries Office Building
- Funding;
- IUU fishing activities - “unreported” fishing, data, catch;
- Implementation of Port State Measures Responsibilities;
- Limited capacity and personnel for effective MCS;
- Lack of Collaboration between line agencies (Immigration, Maritime, Customs, Ports and Harbour, Police etc..);
- Inadequate port infrastructure to accommodate fishing vessels;
- Political interference;
- Underpaid staff

# Maritime College







The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy blue. These shapes are primarily located on the right side of the frame, creating a dynamic, modern aesthetic. The text is centered on a white background.

# **The SPFC Crew and Others**

# Espiritu Santo

Write a description for your map.

Hokua  
Takumuna  
Pesena  
Lajmoli  
Penaoru  
Wonisule  
Piapouria  
Port Olry  
Hog Harbour  
Térou  
Lowérié  
Longtal  
Espiritu Santo  
Coulons  
Wulakarakara  
Ouere  
Maloevole  
Luganville  
Pakatam  
Abnetare  
Olo Olo

Vanuatu

Legend



Google Earth

Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO  
Image Landsat / Copernicus





**Former Crew and Fishermen**



# Issues Cont'd

- Crewing legislation and policies
- Illiteracy (Academic and Financial)
- Run down Maritime College Facility and outdated curriculum
- Awareness on crew related matters
- Crew Agent Obligations
- Abuse of crew benefits (family members, agents, politicians, middle-man...etc)
- Repatriation costs - illness, injuries even deaths
- Working conditions on fishing vessels
- Contracts and agreements

# Approach

## **What was the approach taken to addressing the issue?**

- Identify the current mechanisms (Legislation, Policies, Guidelines, SOPs etc)
- Identify bodies, government entities, stakeholders

## **Why did you take this approach?**

- Relevant bodies or personnel work to ensure issues identified are addressed
- Avoid duplicity
- Builds confidence and morale

# What was done? (Fisheries)

Vanuatu was given a yellow card in 2013 by the EU for its inability to effectively carry out MCS activities on its flag vessels heavily involved in IUU fishing activities in all the RFMOs it was a party to;

This prompted:

- Legislative and policy reforms;
- Withdrawal from IOTC and ICCAT;
- Reduction of fleet size from more than 300 to below 200 flagged fishing vessels;
- Effective participation in capacity building programs at national, regional and international level;
- Data collection compilation, storage and management processes strengthened with introduction of International Fisheries Unit;
- Strengthening of VMS regime;
- Sanctions issued to offending vessels, operators;
- Effective utilisation of observer program;
- Active RFMO participation
- Effective participation in regional MCS operations



# What was done? (Maritime and Crewing)

- Established new Maritime Office - Vanuatu Maritime Safety Authority (VMSA)
  - Oversees Sea Safety
  - Search and Rescue
  - Crewing
  - Seafarers Association
- Legislative and policy review
- Commission of Inquiry on management of Maritime College
- Discussions on reviewing Maritime College Syllabus and curriculum
- Crewing legislation
- Work on ratification of Cape Town Agreement, STCW-F and Convention 188

# Challenges

- Still a Department;
- No office building;
- Political Interferences;
- Public Service Bureaucracy;
- Government Financial system really slow;
- IUU Fishing activities becoming sophisticated with latest drive in technology;
- Judiciary still lagging behind in fisheries and maritime related matters;
- Lacking in MCS tools, assets, equipment, funding, advance training and capacity building opportunities;
- Effective inter-agency cooperation at national, regional and international level;

# Challenges Cont'd

- Crew benefits require correct information and updates to settle 2 decades long of debate;
- Maritime College needs major overhaul to be a competent institute;
- Vessel Standards Policy yet to be made to address current sub-standard conditions of vessels operating in Vanuatu's EEZ and in international waters;

# **Recommendations**

- ▶ Government to prioritise efforts, resources and funding for fisheries, crew and maritime related matters, infrastructure, benefits, issues etc.
- ▶ More collaborative effort on inter-agency operations;

# **Conclusion**

All mechanisms, plans, policies, guidelines, legislation, measures, instruments, have their limitations. They may be riddled with setbacks, challenges in any type or form, but should not deter one's efforts in pressing on for better outcomes. In due time, our fervent hope is that the positive outcomes, successes and achievements outweigh the challenges and negative impacts on MCS work and crew labour standards.

**Tank Yiu  
Tumas!**

