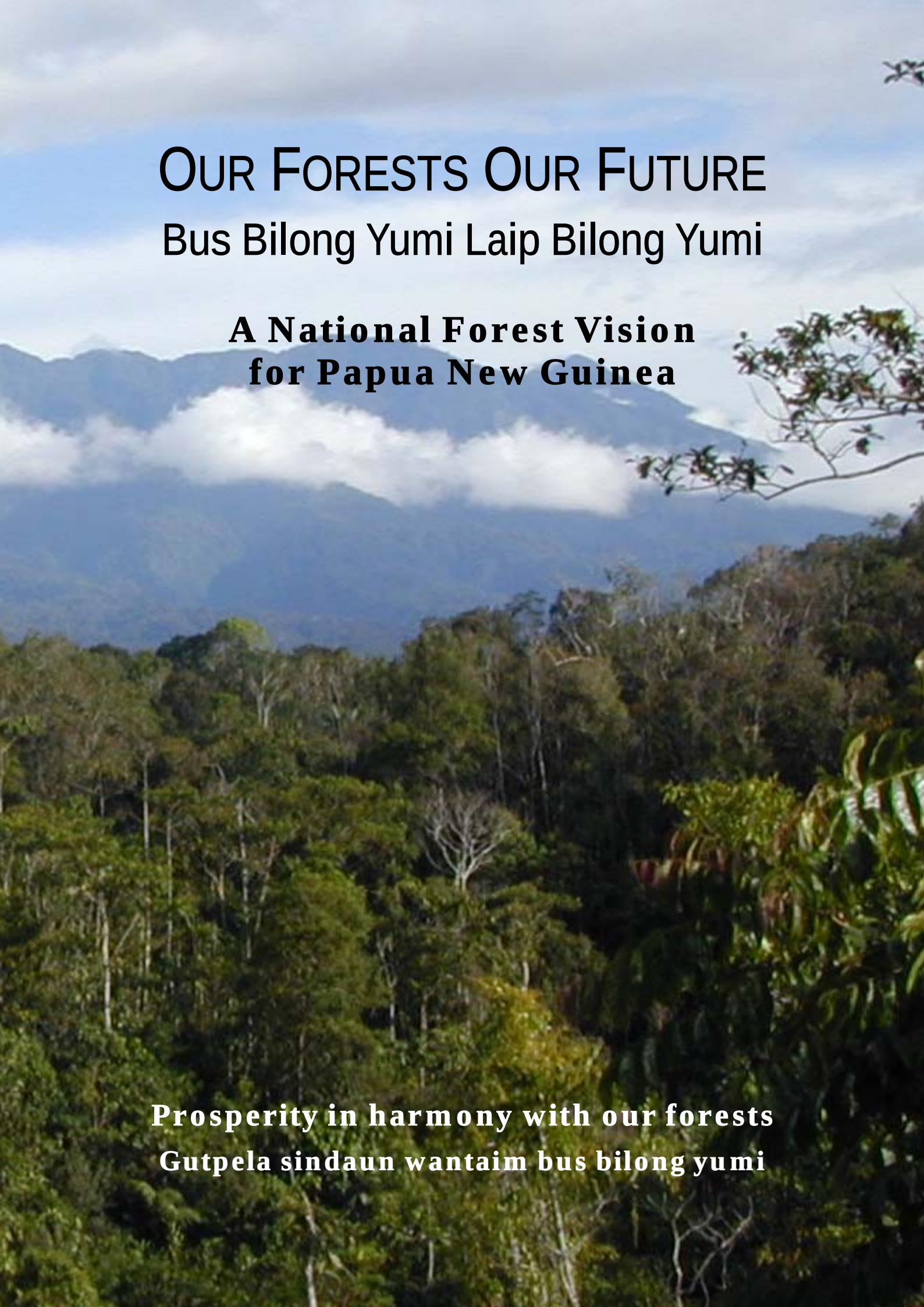

OUR FORESTS OUR FUTURE

Bus Bilong Yumi Laip Bilong Yumi

A National Forest Vision for Papua New Guinea

Prosperity in harmony with our forests

Gutpela sindaun wantaim bus bilong yumi

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Our Vision

Our Vision is for our people to have a greater involvement in forest management and a bigger and fairer share of the social and economic benefits while we protect its many different values.

Why we need a Vision

Papua New Guinea is blessed with large areas of natural tropical forest that are vital to the wellbeing of our people. They are also so important they are helping to decide the future of the world we live in.

However these valuable forests are threatened by population growth, large-scale commercial activities, uncontrolled timber harvesting and growing expectations for services, money and other benefits.

There are though better ways of using our forests, without destroying them. We need to balance traditional uses with the modern pressure for economic development. We need to ensure the forests are managed in a way that is good for all of our communities and the environment.

Since Independence the government focus for forest management has been on large-scale harvesting and log exports to generate revenue, provide local incomes and promote services.

But while logging operations have delivered some benefits they have also created problems.

Government has earned a lot of income from logging but puts little money back; local benefits have been short-term; and there have been negative social impacts. More than five million hectares of forest have been affected by logging with very little or no replanting to ensure future harvesting. Large-areas are described as 'logged out'[1] and only limited areas of forest remain which can sustain large-scale harvesting in the future. As a result the money the government has been earning will soon start to fall dramatically.[2]

Large-scale commercial operations in remote areas are difficult to organise and monitor. These operations often do not involve land owners in planning and activities and do not respect their legal rights as landowners. Our people often feel powerless - they are 'spectators on their own land' instead of active players - and little is done to promote self-reliance or human development.

Large foreign companies dominate the logging industry and they have far more power than either resource owners or government agencies.

There has also been very little plantation development in PNG to produce steady yields of quality timber for processing industries. There is no support for replanting or better management in the large areas of the country where people lack access to firewood and timber for housing.

Current forest management is clearly failing our duty to ensure wise management and sustainable use of our forests. This is affecting our human development and economic growth.

We need a new Vision for forest management that respects our duty to care for our forests; protects the full range of forest values and uses; maximises economic returns; and promotes human development and sustainable livelihoods.

Vision and goals

Our Vision is for our people to have a greater involvement in forest management and a bigger and fairer share of the social and economic benefits while we protect its many different values.

This vision promotes our national interest; is based on the Goals and Directive Principles in our Constitution; and complies with all existing forestry laws and policies.

To achieve this Vision there are four key goals that need to be met

1. <u>To honour our duty to care for our environment and better protect and manage our natural resources</u>

   1.1 To uphold our Constitutional obligations and ensure compliance with our National Goals and Directive Principles.

   1.2 To ensure we *'manage, develop and protect forest resources and the environment so as to conserve and renew them as an asset for succeeding generations'* and ensure *'maximization of Papua New Guinean participation'* as required in the Forestry Act.[5]

   1.3 To respect ancestral duties to care for and protect our natural environment and pass it on to future generations without damaging its diversity or value

2. <u>To preserve the unique diversity of our forest and its full range of values and uses</u>

   2.1 To preserve our unique and rich variety of different forest types

   2.2 To preserve the many different values and uses of the forest including the vital support they provide for the daily needs of local people.

   2.3 To preserve the full range of animal and plant life in our forests.

   2.4 To properly manage commercial activities so they protect the variety and biology of the forests and also respect the rights and interests of our people

Our forests

"Our rich tapestry of forests are a unique asset that can supply a diverse range of products, nationally important ecological services and economic opportunities while preserving a vast wealth of biological diversity"[4]

Hon. Sasa Zibe, Minister for the Environment, 2002

Vision and goals

3. To use the economic value of forest products and services to generate income and develop infrastructure

   3.1 To increase current economic returns while reducing the impact of commercial activities

   3.2 To revive forest areas damaged by logging or other industrial activities

   3.3 To provide access to fuel wood and construction timber by establishing wood lots where supplies are scarce

   3.4 To promote the establishment of properly managed commercial tree plantations in non-forest areas

4. To promote human development, improve livelihoods and secure our long-term future through local ownership and decision making

   4.1 To ensure forest activities are planned and managed so our people make the key choices and are always actively involved in making decisions and carrying them out

   4.2 To maximize Papua New Guinean participation in any commercial activities based around forest use

   4.3 To ensure economic returns for our people are maximised and financial benefits are shared more evenly

Empowering people

"Our people have always lived off the land and sea and they will continue to do so...
They are a resilient and productive people in their own ways...
All that the government can do now is to empower them to live self supporting lives"[6]

Hon. Michael Somare, Prime Minister, 2004

Constitutional obligations

Our Constitutional Goals require:

- all citizens have an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the development of our country
- PNG be politically and economically independent and our economy basically self-reliant
- our natural resources and environment be conserved and used for the collective benefit of us all, and be replenished for the benefit of future generations

Our Constitutional Principles require:

- everyone be involved in our endeavours to achieve integral human development and for every person and to seek fulfilment through their contribution to the common good
- citizens and government to control the bulk of economic enterprise and production
- wise use be made of our natural resources and the environment in the interests of our development and in trust for future generations;
- the conservation and replenishment, for the benefit of ourselves and posterity, of the environment and its sacred, scenic and historical qualities;
- all necessary steps to be taken to give adequate protection to our valued birds, animals, fish, insects, plants and trees
- particular emphasis in our economic development to be placed on small-scale artisan, service & business activity

Forest diversity, values & uses

1. Forest diversity

Papua New Guinea has a rich tapestry of natural forest types that extend from our long shoreline to our high mountain valleys. As many as forty-five different forest types have been identified across five climatic zones in Papua New Guinea.[7]

All these forests are all under customary ownership which is recognised and protected in our Constitution and laws.

These forests are as vast as they are valuable and they have existed for many thousands of years. They are home to a complex web of life that includes animals, plants and insects and our own people.

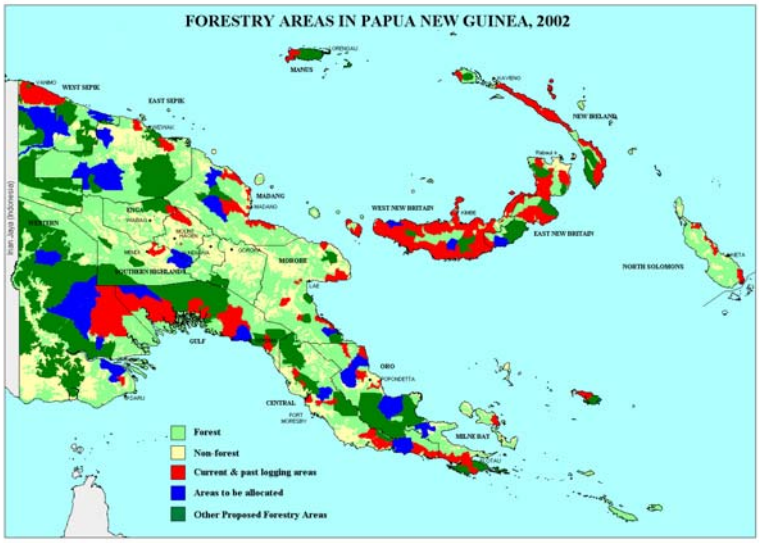
About 60% of Papua New Guinea's landmass, or 275,000 square kilometers, is covered by forest.[8] This means that around 40% of our land (185,000 square kilometers) has only very limited or no tree cover.

Papua New Guinea has twice as much forest as all its Pacific island neighbors together, and the forests of New Guinea form the third largest block of rainforest on our planet.

Much of the existing forest is virgin primary forest. About one fifth, between 5 - 6 million hectares, has been disturbed by logging or other industrial activity and is classified as secondary or re-growth forest.[9] There are also a few small areas of commercial tree plantations (about 60,000 hectares in 2006).

In areas without forest cover more than 2 million people live with very limited access to basic resources such as firewood and simple building materials.

It is reported between 130,000 - 160,000 hectares of forest are lost every year through logging, agriculture, mining, firewood collection, resettlement and infrastructure development.[10]



Forest diversity, values & uses

Forest spirits

"Our ancient animistic belief is that everything has a spirit. While this belief should not frighten us from 'subduing the earth' for our collective benefit, it should remind us that blind destruction of the environment will lead not only to pollution but to the 'death of the earth' which is vital to our nation".

Constitutional Planning Committee Report, Chapter 2 paragraph 90

2. Forest Values

When we think about our forests we should focus on more than the financial returns to government, landowners and logging companies from cutting down trees and selling logs.

Our forests are more than just trees and trees more than just timber.

Forests are the 'lungs of the earth' and are an integral part of our daily lives - they support and promote human health, the life of the community, spirituality and culture, education and ecological integrity.

The total non timber economic value of PNG forests has been estimated to be over US$6,200 per hectare - US$167 billion in total.[11] When forests are depleted many of these values are reduced or lost altogether and we all lose a massive economic resource as well as a part of our identity.

2.1 Spiritual and cultural values

In Papua New Guinea we have been living in harmony with our natural environment for many thousands of years.

Our natural environment helps to define our existence. In many ways, our identity is linked to our environment and our forests have an important role in our many and varied cultures, languages and spiritual beliefs.

The destruction of our environment can confuse and threaten our sense of identity and the way we lead our life. It also undermines our culture. We should maintain our environment because it is part of us.

2.2 Ecological values

Our forests meet ecological functions that are vitally important for all of Papua New Guinea.

Our forests provide us with clean water for drinking and bathing, fresh air to breathe, rich soils for our gardens, clean habitats for fish and other aquatic life. Our forests regulate our climate by cooling temperatures and ensuring regular rainfall.

When forests are removed or damaged, their ability to perform these functions is reduced. This can lead to erosion and loss of fertility (as the ground is exposed to direct sunlight, wind and rain) which deprive us of rich soils. Erosion also pollutes water courses and increases disease levels for our people, reduces fish stocks and, in coastal areas, damages reef systems that become covered in silt and slowly die. The removal of shade from our riverbanks and streams also impacts on life in the water and reduces water quality.

As our planet faces greater environmental pressures the natural value of our forests are increasingly being recognised and may provide the opportunity for new trade in the future.

Forest diversity, values & uses

2.3 Biological values

Our forests contain a wealth of biological diversity which is recognised internationally and which should also be a source of great pride for us.

Our forests contain a wide variety of plant, animal and insect life. It is estimated that our forests contain as many as 20,000 different species of higher plants and as much as 7.5% of all the biological diversity on the entire planet.[12]

We have the world's greatest diversity of orchids, more than 20,000 species of fern, the world's smallest parrot and its largest butterfly as well as many other unique bird, mammal, and reptile and amphibian species.

And yet many areas of our tropical forest have not been scientifically examined and many species still remain unknown.

3. Forest Uses

Forests support our basic needs and provide cash income for our people. They provide timber and other wood resources. They contain non timber forest products and rich genetic and medicinal resources. They can support tourism, research and recreational opportunities

3.1 Basic needs

Throughout our history we have relied on the forest to provide a wide range of products and services that are important for our wellbeing and daily needs.

Today, some 90% of our population still live in rural areas. Over half have daily access to the forest to hunt and gather food, collect medicinal plants, firewood and other products - the forests are the main source of our food, water and shelter.

Papua New Guinea's forests directly support 3 to 3.5 million people out of our total population of 6 million.[13]

Forest diversity, values & uses

3.2 Value added uses

Our forests are an important asset that can promote economic activity to benefit our people and strengthen the national economy. By changing the way we harvest and use timber on a commercial scale, we can increase the economic returns and control the social and environmental impacts – this will benefit our people, the economy and government revenues *(see further Section 5 below)*.

Papua New Guinea has sufficient forest resources to be largely self-sufficient if it develops proper wood processing and manufacturing industries.

Timber, processed wood products and finished items also have the potential to raise important export revenues.

Our people have traditionally collected a wide range of natural products from the forest for their basic needs and local trade. The rights of our people to access their forest to hunt gather and collect these items for their use must be protected.

Some non-wood products also have a commercial value and there is increasing interest in a range of different items. Traditionally the focus has been on butterfly trading, orchid sales, live birds and animals and traditional artefacts. In the last few years there has been a dramatic increase in the collection and trading of eaglewood and the potential medical applications of plants and other species.

Our strength is in the land

"We believe that since we are a rural people, our strength should be essentially in the land and the use of our innate artistic talents"

"We caution that large-scale industries should be pursued only after very careful and thorough consideration of the likely consequences upon the social and spiritual fabric of our people"

"The basic concept in our society with regard to the use of natural resources is that one generation holds and uses resources in the capacity of trustee for future generations. We, the generation of today, cannot squander our country's resources. We would clearly be failing in our responsibility if we sold our resources to foreigners for our own short term benefit, without regard to the needs of generations after us"

Constitutional Planning Committee Report, 1975

Action strategies

To ensure this Vision and its objectives are achieved a number of strategies will have to be implemented.

1. Involve our people in planning and decision making

Our forests should contribute to social harmony, service delivery, infrastructure development and economic wellbeing - this can only be achieved if our people have a greater involvement in the decisions about how resources are used.

Our people who depend most directly on the forest for its products and services are recognised in law as its custodians. They should be more involved in decisions about how forests should be managed.

Decisions should be made at the village and community level in ways that encourage women and men, old and young to be involved and to make their views known. They must be fully informed about their rights, the implications of their decisions and be able to make their choices freely.

Forest experts and community trainers are needed to guide our people through planning processes and provide education and advice on economic opportunities.

Forest planning should be part of a wider community process to encourage self reliance and local solutions while ensuring natural resources are well managed.

Local management plans should support the close links between people and their natural environment.

Planning decisions should promote job and business opportunities for our people and ensure the size of any commercial operations is suited to the community and the environment.

2. Adopt new forest management standards

New forest management standards must be adopted for all commercial activities to ensure they support our social, economic and environmental needs in a more responsible manner. Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standards that meet these criteria have been developed in PNG by a multi-stakeholder group and have been internationally endorsed.

These FSC standards are being applied successfully in community forestry operations which benefit from higher prices on timber sales as the market is willing to pay more for timber from legal and sustainable sources.

Monitoring and enforcement of forest standards needs to be contracted out to ensure independence. This will allow the National Forest Authority to spend more time and resources on other priority areas (such as giving our people more power to help design and decide forest policy, replanting and proper forest planning).

Action strategies

Better returns

A small sawmill processing just 2,000 cubic metres of logs each year can generate revenues of K750,000, a profit margin of 22% and employ 15 people full time.[13]

3. Maximize economic returns

Commercial timber production should be based around small and medium scale processing operations. These offer higher economic returns that are spread more widely and have lower social and environmental impacts. By comparison, existing export logging removes more trees in an uncontrolled manner for lower returns – this approach has a shorter lifespan and is leaving far more serious social and other impacts.

All commercial forest management should comply with internationally accepted standards like those of the FSC to ensure more positive benefits for our people, environment and economy.

International markets support independent third party certification of timber products as an industry standard. Papua New Guinea is in a position to be one of the countries that takes a leading role on this issue.

Plantations can supply regular volumes of high value timber to support local manufacturing facilities that add value. Current policies allowing the export of high value plantation species as raw logs and rough sawn timber should be changed. Plantation harvesting must involve replanting to ensure timber supplies will continue into the future.

4. Fairer share of financial benefits

Currently our people receive the smallest share (about 30%) of the financial returns from large-scale logging operations; the largest share (70%) is divided between foreign logging companies and government. The royalty paid to landowners is currently only ten Kina per cubic metre (about US$3).

In the future our people must receive a much larger share of economic opportunities and benefits from commercial activities. They should also have more control over forest use.

Royalties on timber for resource owners should be maximised and our people should have the opportunity to be involved in harvesting and processing activities.

Government revenues should come from sales and company taxes rather than the current log export tax.

Action strategies

5. Promote non-timber forest products

Non timber forest products can provide important income opportunities.

The collection of non-wood products for commercial sale outside the local area should be controlled by an approved management plan, based on the informed consent of resource owners. This should ensure the environmental, social and economic benefits of the activity will last well into the future.

There are also a range of products that can be grown and harvested, such as vanilla and cinnamon, without disturbing the fabric of the forest.

The forest can also stimulate economic activity and provide local jobs and cash incomes through activities such as tourism, adventure holidays, bird watching and wildlife tours.

The National Forest Service should work with other government agencies to develop policies and programs to promote the collection and sale of non-timber forest products. The National Forest Service should also support a network of extension officers.

There are also new opportunities internationally for financial returns from environmental services. These schemes should be studied to identify opportunities for our people. Any financial returns need to be well-managed and fairly distributed among our people and support new services.

Sustainable incomes

It is estimated that a single family can earn a sustainable income of over K5,000 a year from just 20 vanilla plants each producing 2 kilos of beans.

6. Reviving the forest

There are large areas of degraded forest in Papua New Guinea, particularly in those Provinces where there has been a lot of commercial logging such as West New Britain and New Ireland.

Where forests have been logged and then abandoned, the original mix of tree species does not re-establish as faster growing ‘weed’ species take over. This reduces the future value of the forest, but it can be revived.

Active management programs could be implemented by our people with government training and support from forestry and other officers. Funding to implement work programs is available from the special fees that have already been collected.

These programs should use the knowledge and skills that are available through the Forest Research Institute and from those involved in previous government and privately sponsored projects.

7. Working with nature

Papua New Guinea has large areas of land with no tree cover. Here local people can struggle to find fuel for their cooking fires and building materials. Small woodlots and intercropping can help these shortages.

Woodlots can be locally owned and controlled and can provide for the current and future needs of local communities. Our people should be encouraged and trained to undertake tree planting.

Papua New Guinea also has the right natural conditions to successfully grow trees in commercial plantations. Balsa, rubber, teak and other high value species are suited to our conditions.

Action strategies

Existing plantations should be revived, harvested areas replanted and new areas established in non-forest areas where they can provide social, economic and environmental benefits.

Independent third party certification to international standards must be required for commercial plantations to ensure long term use. From past experience, planting large areas of single species for low value uses such as wood chipping have proved not to be a good option.

Natural forests have many advantages over tree plantations. Therefore plantations should not be viewed as a replacement for natural forests.

8. Working together

This Vision can be shared successfully by all stakeholders including political parties, politicians, churches, trade unions, local organisations and the international community.

The most important changes are for the Forest Authority to refocus and build wider networks with our people, and for other agencies to work together more closely.

The Forest Authority makes it easy for foreign owned large-scale log exporters to operate but ignores the fact our forests are owned by the people. The Forest Authority should be supporting landowners by helping them to make informed decisions, promoting medium and small scale sawmilling and other processing and encouraging better use of the forests.

The Forest Authority needs to shift more of its operations into the Provinces and rural areas. It should focus on working with rural communities, government and non government agencies to provide technical support and training. This will help to build local capacity, offer more benefits for our people and ensure forest resources are managed more responsibly.

9. Existing large-scale export operations

Large-scale logging and raw log exports need to be phased out by not allocating any new large-scale logging permits and not granting extensions to existing permits. The export tax revenue from log exports will be replaced by taxes generated from small and medium scale processing, greater employment opportunities and more trade in domestic timber products.

Current logging operations need to be strictly audited by independent bodies to ensure compliance with existing laws and contractual obligations and new forest management standards. Existing processing obligations must be strictly enforced and new processing operations encouraged.

Where compliance with legal requirements cannot be achieved, appropriate measures should be taken to close operations, protect resource owners interests and recover losses.

Benefits

1. Growing communities

Responsibility for forest management should be returned to the hands of local customary owners who should be supported by the Forest Authority and other agencies.

Our people (including women and younger people) must be given more power to decide the future of their forests. This partnership will improve the management of the forests and increase the economic benefits. It will also help enforce Constitutional and other legal duties.

This approach will ensure our people learn new skills, have more jobs and income earning opportunities and receive better financial returns from timber operations.

Rural communities will see increased cash incomes, greater economic activity and better services to further improve their quality of life. These will also help provide more schooling, better health outcomes (including reducing HIV/AIDS risks) and less crime and violence.

2. Greater economic activity and more jobs

A more responsible approach to forest use will provide employment and contribute to a new level of economic activity.[14]

Local sawmills will create at least three times as many jobs for every tree felled as large-scale logging. They can be managed and maintained by skilled Papua New Guineans, avoiding the need for a large expatriate workforce. [15]

Local sawmills require much lower levels of investment and are much more suitable to Papua New Guinean ownership. They also provide new opportunities for value adding and manufacturing both of which offer further economic and social benefits.

Greater revenues and increased economic activity mean that there is more money to satisfy all stakeholders including local people, government and business.[16]

There would also be new jobs in the service industries that support sawmilling and in the processing and manufacturing sectors. This economic activity will further increase government revenues.

Degraded forest areas will be restored and offer new opportunities for sustainable use and income generation in the future.

Woodlots will provide employment, new cash incomes and serve the needs of local communities for firewood and other timber products.

Improved plantation management will also provide jobs and sustainable incomes and opportunities for new processing industries which will be attracted by guaranteed continuity of supply.

Benefits

Subsistence values

More than 3 million people in Papua New Guinea rely on the forest for their daily needs. If the forest was taken away and these people had to rely on store goods, this might easily cost them more than K50 a week for each person.

K50 per week for each person would be the equivalent of K7.5 billion each year in total.

That means the subsistence value of our forests to rural people could be over K7.5 billion each year!

Even if the weekly figure was just K20, the subsistence value of the forest would still be K3 billion per year.

3. Better infrastructure

Greater economic activity, more jobs, more local businesses, better community incomes and new tax revenues will all contribute to the sustainable, long-term development of rural infrastructure.

New roads and bridges, better communications infrastructure, new schools and health facilities that are fully equipped and staffed are just some of the benefits that will flow from thriving local economies based around medium and small-scale timber harvesting and processing.

4. Environmental protection

Small and medium scale timber processing operations have much lower environmental impacts than current large-scale log export operations.

Focusing on the production of processed timber products will greatly reduce the area of forest that is harvested each year. Just processing logs into rough sawn timber can produce the same export value from one-quarter of the number of trees. If the current value of log exports was substituted with exports of rough sawn timber, the number of trees that would have to be cut would be 75% lower.

Reducing the area that is harvested allows much more care to be taken. It also allows for proper planning and monitoring so there is much less damage to the standing forest, better re-growth and less ground disturbance and erosion.

New forest management standards will reduce the impact of commercial forest operations and ensure timber harvesting can continue with less damage to the environment.

Replanting programs will improve the quality of forest areas that have been harvested.

5. Better governance

There is currently a complete power imbalance between giant transnational timber companies on the one side and local communities, government agencies and politicians on the other. This has allowed the timber companies to operate largely outside the law and fuelled corruption. The influx of foreign workers and their alcohol and pornography into remote rural areas have also led to violence and social problems and undermined local governance structures.

Exchanging giant companies for much smaller, locally owned businesses that deliver much greater benefits will improve governance, reduce corruption and allow laws and regulations to be properly enforced. There will also be less crime and social disruption.

Who benefits

Some of the benefits from the implementation of this Forest Vision for different groups are listed in the Table below

Local people	Workers / graduates	Government
* Greater involvement in decision making * Human development and empowerment * Greater business and job opportunities * Greater resource rents and increased local incomes * Commercial operations that are socially and environmentally positive * Local infrastructure development * Increased economic activity and trade * Improved service delivery and partnerships from government and non-government agencies * Improved governance, schooling and health outcomes * Reduced poverty and better social indicators	* New employment and business opportunities * Better training and new skills * Better working and housing conditions * Improved health and safety * Better monitoring by government agencies * Improved social conditions	* Increased income from taxation on trade and business * Government agencies better able to deliver services * Improved governance through better accountability, appropriate sizing and some outsourcing * International credibility and the opportunity to show international leadership by assisting neighbouring countries * Reduced social problems and better infrastructure for service delivery
Business / economy	**Politicians**	**International community**
* Greater economic activity * More business opportunities * Improved economic conditions and better business environment * Improved governance * Less crime * Better international profile * Better service delivery from government agencies * Better educated and healthier workforce	* Greater economic prosperity in local electorates * Better local services and improved health and social outcomes * Improved infrastructure * Less crime * Better skilled and more educated local population	* Sustained supply of legal and sustainable timber and timber products * Environmental services from the forest * Potential products from the rich biodiversity * Improved governance / international security * Reduced aid dependency * More trade opportunities

International assistance

If Papua New Guinea can take the political steps to translate this Vision into reality so we do manage our forests wisely, we will be setting an international standard for others to follow. And we will find that there is plenty of finance and other support available from the international community to assist us in realizing our Vision.

Conclusion

Our forests are an important part of our lives and if we manage them sensibly they can continue to provide a whole range of benefits and contribute to the growth and development of our Nation.

Wise forest management is good for us, good for the environment and good for the planet.

The current emphasis on large-scale commercial harvesting of logs which are then exported is bad for local people, bad for PNG and bad for the forest.

We already have all the skills and knowledge we need to properly manage our forests so they sustain local people and provide economic opportunities, jobs and fund infrastructure development.

Our forests are our future but in order to achieve this simple vision we need to reassert control over what is our greatest natural asset.

Please join and support the adoption and implementation of this National Forest Vision so we can achieve prosperity in harmony with our forests for the benefit of everyone now and in the future

A unique Nation

We are not a uniform society where one solution or strategy will always be appropriate.

We have a unique and very varied assortment of languages, customs, cultures, geography, topography and climate.

The hopes, desires and needs of communities and clans, families and individuals can vary widely within even a small area.

This presents us with unique challenges but also many possibilities if we take the time to look for local solutions that build self-reliance.

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14 If Papua New Guinea produced 500,000 cubic meters of sawn timber each year that could generate an annual income of over K750 million - in comparison, in 2005, total log exports of 2.1 million cubic meters generated just K370 million kina
15 Using small-scale mills to produce 50% of the sawn timber could provide direct employment for 5,000 people (500 mills each employing 10 people and producing 500 cubic meters) and medium scale mills producing the other 50% could employ up to a further 3,750 people (250 mills each employing 15 people and producing 1,000 cubic meters)
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Wider framework

The successful management of our forests relies on a vibrant society that respects differences, the rule of law and individual rights and freedoms and where individual communities assume responsibility for their own future.

This National Forest Vision should form part of that wider framework.

This booklet has been developed by a coalition of local people and organizations. It does not reflect the ideas, values or goals of any one person or group but is a national statement of hope for the future of our forests as an integral part of the rich tapestry of life that is PAPUA NEW GUINEA.

This National Forest Vision describes how forests should be used and managed and what that will mean for local people and our natural environment. It provides a road map to address our needs and priorities so outside driven projects do not dictate how our resources are used and we manage our forests through a strategic level approach that insures the interests of local people take priority.