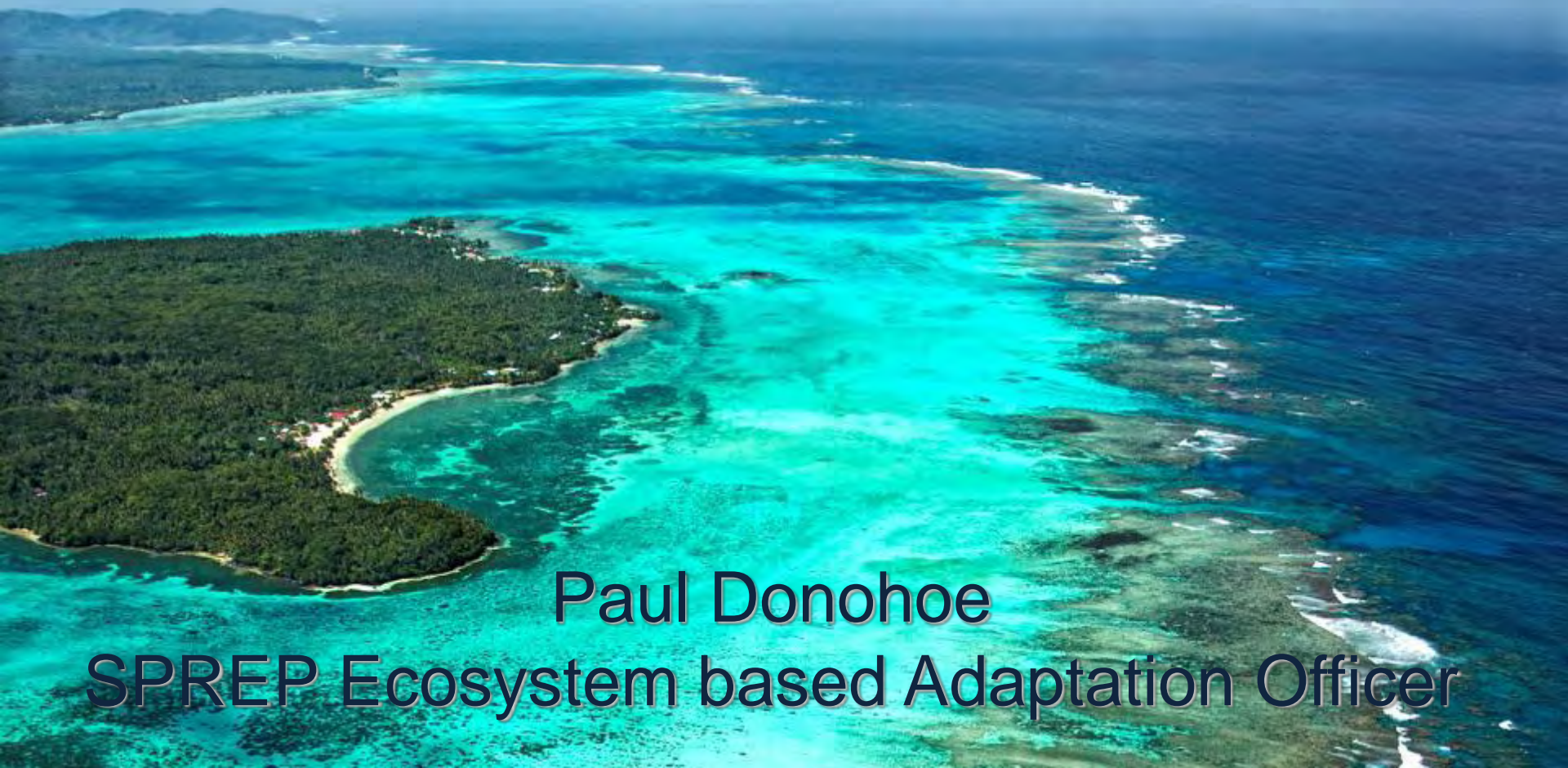




# Community & Stakeholder Engagement –EbA initiatives in the Pacific Islands



Paul Donohoe

SPREP Ecosystem based Adaptation Officer



# Background to SPREP



- Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
- 26 Member countries and territories
- Four programmes:
  - *Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management*
  - *Climate Change*
  - *Waste Management and Pollution*
  - *Environmental Monitoring and Governance*
- Approximately 70 staff, all in Apia, Samoa
- Approximately 20% core budget, 80% project funded



# Threats to Pacific island ecosystems

Mining and Logging

Pollution and Waste

Climate Change



Coastal Development

Unsustainable Fishing

Invasive Species

Emerging Uses



Engaging the community in EbA is particularly relevant in Pacific islands due to:

- High primary dependence and cultural linkages of people on natural resources
- Ecosystem actions are long term and ongoing
- Customary land ownership – local people responsible for resource management
- Many remote villages, expensive and difficult to bring in materials or provide external assistance
- Opportunity to support local governance and cultural structures



# Choiseul Province, Solomon Islands

Molevanga

Loimuni

Vurango

Polo

Ogho

Bangara

Voruvoru

Susuka

Soranamola

Voza

Saqigae

Panarui

Sasamunga

Sepa

Katurasele

Papara

Loloko

Pangoe

Zaru

Taqibangara

Nuatabu

Varunga

Posarae

Boeboe

Vaghena

(Arariki and Kukiti)

- Community – central focus of V&A Assessment



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

27 Communities visited –over 9 weeks – with mix of gender, language skills and expertise.

26,372

Population recorded  
in 2009 census

2.8%

Annual population  
growth rate

503

Number of  
communities

3,292km<sup>2</sup>

Total land area





# Choiseul Community Perceptions and Adaptation options

- Vulnerability driven by decreasing ability to deal with climate stresses (social and economic pressures).
- ‘Climate Change’ being blamed for reduction in adaptive capacity.
- Climate variability and extremes locally dealt with historically.
- Disempowerment as perception that issues are outside community control and therefore requiring externally driven solutions
- EbA must focus on local capacity to adapt and local priorities
- Empowerment comes from focusing on what communities have done in the past and building on these





# Participatory Approach– Lessons from Choiseul

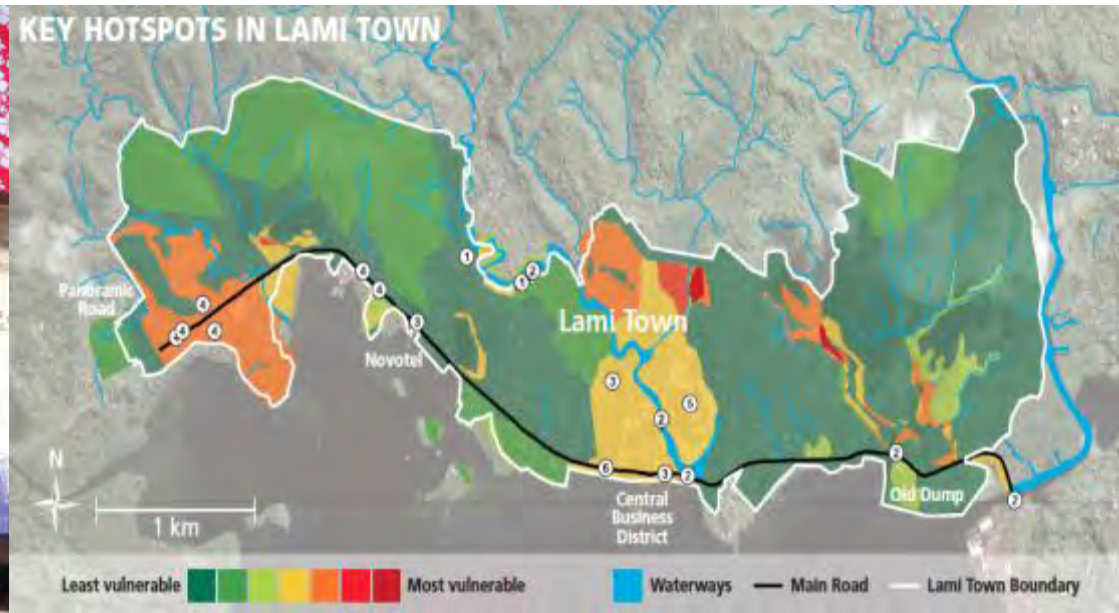
Include respected community leaders as part of the team

- Specific women, youth and men engagement groups
- Cross sector representation – multiple Government Ministries
- Respect and follow community protocols
- Engage other local stakeholders – i.e. Church leaders
- Communicate messages visually and in the correct cultural context
- Use local examples and concentrate efforts on community ‘champions’
- Consistent and regular visits to communities
- Participatory approach to understanding climate change



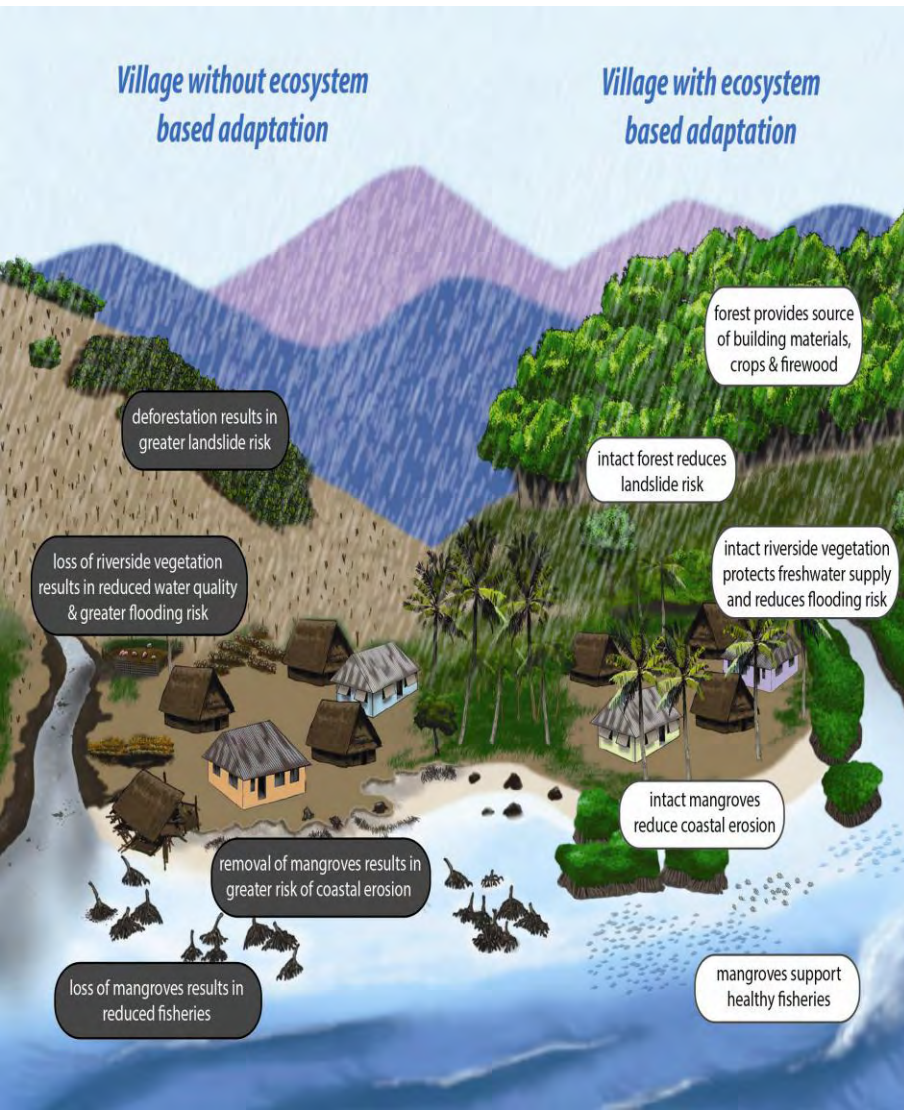
# Different contexts – Different approaches

- Lami Town, Fiji – Semi-Urban context – Economic analysis of EbA options and alternatives – participatory mapping – focus on vulnerable communities
- Samoa – awareness of coastal ecosystem options – adaptation not just about seawalls





# Communicate to engage



- Communicate visually ecosystem links and land-use decisions – engage local and policy levels.
- Clear appropriate messages for EbA – sustainable use – focus on livelihoods.
- Two ‘toolbox’ approach – based on traditional and contemporary resource management practices.
- EbA to be part of wider adaptation strategy.

# Engage Multiple Stakeholders – Integrated Adaptation Approach



- EbA approaches must engage across multiple sectors – not just environment.
- Focus on a ridge to community to reef approach across multiple land tenure.
- Consider other influencing factors – legislation, socio-economic, political and cultural factors.
- Partnerships & Coordination – Donors, agencies, NGOs to coordinate themselves then engage communities – assist local action.



# Conclusions

- Community engagement varies depending on the context.
- EbA should focus on local ownership of solutions.
- EbA must engage at multiple levels and across sectors.
- Integrated Adaptation approaches that incorporate EbA throughout are most effective.





# Further Information

[www.sprep.org/resources/publications](http://www.sprep.org/resources/publications)

1. Pacific Island Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Climate Change Adaptation: Building on Nature's Resilience.
2. A comparative analysis of ecosystem-based adaptation and engineering options for Lami Town, Fiji.
3. Choiseul Province Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment Report, Solomon Islands.