



Solomon Islands Nasinol Policy Framework *blong* KALSA

Mainstreaming KALSA in Nation-building and Development



European Union



SPC
Secretariat
of the Pacific
Community

Solomon Islands Nasinol Policy Framework *blong* Kalsa

Mainstreaming Kalsa in Nation-building and Development

Compiled by the Division of Culture, Ministry of Culture and Tourism

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*We the people...proud of the wisdom and the **worthy customs** of our ancestors, mindful of our common and diverse **heritage**...Agree and Pledge that...we shall **cherish** and **promote** the different cultural traditions within Solomon Islands*
Constitution of Solomon Islands 1978

Part I INTRODUCTION

A Overview

The Solomon Islands, a nation priding itself on rich cultural diversity, possesses great potential to harness culture as an additional viable and vibrant sector for its development. Traditional knowledge, cultural expressions and indigenous arts remain a source of pride for Solomon Islanders of all ages. In general, the vast majority of its rural populace still practise and observe cultural values, traditions, arts and *kastom*. The influence of culture, or *kastom*, is still present in contemporary society and regulates the lifestyle of local and indigenous communities. Unfortunately, many aspects of this **national treasure** have been lost over the years for numerous reasons. These include marginalisation and a dwindling pool of elders who are **repositories**, or libraries, of traditional knowledge.

Reversing the loss of culture is an immense task, requiring the guidance of a national policy framework, coordinated action and involvement by all stakeholders. Revitalisation should not be the sole or ultimate goal of the policy: equal emphasis should be placed on making the culture sector visible and fostering its socioeconomic potential. This will require full participation of all Solomon Islanders.

The 11th Festival of Pacific Arts provided an opportunity to mobilise the country to refocus on its culture sector. Such mobilisation invites the participation of the government, civil society, the private sector, and development partners. A policy framework provides the necessary foundation to ensure effective coordination and collaboration among all stakeholders.

B Purpose and scope

Cultural policies must provide a framework for Pacific people to maintain dignity; they must respond creatively to changing realities, drawing from both internal and external precedents; and they must foster the symbols and practices that facilitate realistic and valued identities

Ron Crocombe 1994

This Policy Framework sets out directions for Solomon Islands to refocus and invest in its culture sector. It provides broad policy directions and goals for the safeguarding, protection, preservation, promotion and development of the culture sector. Similarly, it identifies and addresses cross-cutting issues underpinning the country's arts, culture, *kastom* and heritage.

Institutional governance and cross-sectoral mobilisation are essential to realise the broad objectives of this framework. As highlighted above, the effective contribution and participation of citizens, cultural practitioners, government agencies, civil society organisations, business houses and the private sector are vital. On this note, the common but differentiated responsibility of each stakeholder needs to be clearly defined in implementation strategies. Effective implementation requires translation of the broad policy objectives into specific programmes, activities and action plans. This task will be undertaken at the national and provincial levels with ongoing oversight and support of the Division of Culture within the **Ministry of Culture and Tourism**. It is thus envisaged that key stakeholders will develop implementation plans and strategies for realising the goals of this framework.

Although this Framework sets out common goals, obligations and aspirations, a flexible approach should be applied in its implementation. The scope of policy objectives is not meant to be restrictive of the freedom of stakeholders to develop strategies that reflect their respective implementation capacities and available resources.

C Policy development and implementation process

This Policy Framework reflects efforts by previous national governments to recognise the culture sector. Notable among these are the Grand Coalition for Change Government's 2006 policy framework, which sought to:

establish policies to deal with sensitive customary and cultural issues...traditional norms and cultural taboos [and] encourage the teaching of culture and the recording of customs by each tribe.

Building on that is the CNURA¹ Government Policy Implementation Framework 2008–2009, which called for the formulation of a national cultural policy and the formation of a taskforce to oversee development of the culture sector. That has now been partially achieved through the development of this Policy Framework.

The Policy Framework is the third step in a national exercise undertaken under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, through a project funded by the European Union and managed by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC).

¹ Coalition for National Unity & Rural Advancement

The three-phase process (mapping, planning and policy) began with cultural mapping undertaken in six provinces. The mapping exercise provided a situation analysis of the state of culture and cultural resources in the country. It identified the areas to be addressed in the country's cultural policy. Findings of the mapping exercise were published in a report and provided the basis for the development of the draft framework, which was discussed in a series of stakeholder workshops. The policy development process was done with guidance of a taskforce comprising representatives of key stakeholder departments.

After being adopted by Cabinet, an implementation plan and budget will be developed under guidance of the taskforce. Additionally, key lead agencies and stakeholders will be identified to spearhead the development of policy implementation action plans for the various components of this Policy Framework.

Due to the wide scope of the Framework, implementation will require a staged approach. A three-year strategic plan has been developed by the Division of Culture in collaboration with the task force. This is necessary to ensure that the limited resources (financial and technical) of the Division of Culture are focused on priority areas that are attainable within a three-year timeframe. A medium to long term action plan capturing all other areas of the Framework will be developed in the course of the initial phase for implementation by other key stakeholders and lead agencies. After the initial phase, a progress review will be carried out by the Division of Culture with the aim of including other important areas not covered within such phase.

Part II VISION OBJECTIVES and PRINCIPLES

...everyone shall have the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community [and] to enjoy the arts....

Art.27, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

A Vision and mission

Vision: The potential of the culture sector and the rich cultural diversity of Solomon Islands are valued and fully appreciated.

Mission: That culture is recognised as an essential component of the socioeconomic, political, and spiritual development aspirations of Solomon Islands.

B Goal and objectives

The overall goal of this Policy Framework is:

to develop, protect and promote Solomon Islands' culture, art and heritage.

There are five broad objectives.

- Objective 1:** Encourage the active participation of Solomon Islanders in cultural industries.
- Objective 2:** Ensure the culture sector is supported as a vital economic development sector.
- Objective 3:** Facilitate the effective participation of traditional institutions in the formal governance processes of the culture sector.
- Objective 4:** Encourage and promote the teaching and transmission of culture, arts and traditional knowledge to younger generations.
- Objective 5:** Foster the protection, preservation, revival and promotion of Solomon Islanders' heritage of indigenous cultures, art and traditional knowledge.

C Broad outcomes

It is envisaged that the phase-by-phase, systematic implementation of this Policy Framework will produce the following outcomes in the long term:

- Outcome 1:** More Solomon Islanders have become active participants or entrepreneurs in cultural industries that target both domestic and international markets.
- Outcome 2:** The full economic potential of the sector has been gradually realised with a marked increase in the production and trade flow of cultural goods and products, both domestically and internationally.
- Outcome 3:** Traditional leaders and cultural institutions have been given greater recognition and roles in the formal governance processes, both at the provincial and national levels.
- Outcome 4:** Culture, arts and traditional knowledge are effectively taught and transmitted to younger generations through concerted proactive education.
- Outcome 5:** Solomon Islanders' heritage of indigenous cultures and traditional knowledge are revived, preserved, protected and promoted through appropriate programmes and mechanisms.

D Principles and values

Realising the aspirations, spirit and meaning of this Policy Framework entails invoking fundamental principles and values that are founded on recognition and appreciation of the country's history and its rich legacy of cultural diversity. These are intrinsic to national identity and pride, social cohesion, peaceful coexistence, and socio-economic progress. They form the core of this Framework.

1. Cultural diversity

The cultural diversity of Solomon Islands is a significant asset that is attributed largely to the contributions of Micronesian, Polynesian and other minority or migrant cultures blending with and complementing Melanesian culture. In promoting national pride in such diversity, the State and stakeholders must develop mechanisms to ensure the promotion of mutual respect, understanding and tolerance of each other's distinctive but equally important cultures and traditions.

2. Cultural development

Cultural development is a necessary element, not an obstacle to realising national development aspirations in the contemporary global community and economy. To this end, traditional knowledge-based creativity should be encouraged and promoted to meet the needs of Solomon Islands' contemporary communities.

3. Non-discrimination

Kalsa (culture) is not a front for segregation, polarisation or barrier between peoples of different origins, ethnicity, race, religion or other forms of affiliation. Rather, it is the very medium that fosters greater understanding and appreciation of the beauty and splendour of diversity in Solomon Islands.

4. Cultural Freedom

There must be greater understanding, respect and tolerance of others' freedom and their right to practise their distinctive cultures without fear or intimidation. For such provides the foundation for unity in diversity, and hence national solidarity.

5. Cultural Evolution

It will be...[our] responsibility...to preserve custom but not to preserve it blindly and without reference to change. For custom has always changed with people's ideas and it must continue to do so.

Fr Walter Lini 1980

Cultural change, evolution and adaptation should be enhanced, encouraged, promoted and facilitated while being shaped to meet and reflect contemporary society's circumstances and needs.

Part III POLICY COMPONENTS

... our history should be accompanied by a creative, adventurous approach to living culture so that we can continue to blend new ideas with [the] old ...

Malama Meleisea 1980

The culture sector is approached holistically to capture all the areas that are significant to Solomon Islanders. However, for practical purposes Policy is divided into three broad sections, each with a number of components. The first section deals with the culture industry; the second focuses on *kastom* and the third on heritage. The Policy focus is not exhaustive: it will be reviewed during the course of implementation.

Section A Cultural and creative Industry

1 Music and Performing Arts

The popular trend of creatively integrating traditional sounds and chants into contemporary music is a development that should be further promoted by the State and the music industry. Undoubtedly, the country's full potential in developing and marketing this unique genre is yet to be fully realised, as it is still in its infancy.

Policy Goals:

- 1.1.** There is a marked increase in the number of artists, performers and entrepreneurs engaging in the creative and ethical adaptation and production of unique traditional music and art.
- 1.2.** Facilities and mechanisms are established that encourage and promote creative and ethical utilisation of traditional sounds and movements in contemporary music and performance.

2 Crafts

This component presents one of the most viable and lucrative areas for participation by both men and women entrepreneurs representative of their local communities. The aesthetic qualities of Solomon Islands' crafts and artefacts demonstrate the artistic wealth of the country and the potential for harnessing the wealth of traditional knowledge still to be uncovered and utilised. Domestic and international markets need to be identified and established to promote this trade. Further, there needs to be established the necessary infrastructure and outlets for displaying and marketing local crafts and artefacts in urban centres.

Policy Goals:

- 2.1** Cottage industries that concentrate on traditional crafts and artwork as their primary product are established in rural communities.
- 2.2** Trade (both domestic and international) of high quality Solomon Island crafts and artefacts has increased to the direct benefit of communities.

3 Visual Arts

Visual art is a vehicle for the creativity of Solomon Island artists. It is currently the leading art form and demonstrates a high degree of dependence on and utilisation of indigenous designs and arts. There is an evident increase in the number of youth with a passion for participation in visual arts. This passion should be promoted and enhanced.

Policy Goals

- 3.1** Local artists are supported and encouraged to express and earn their livelihoods through their talents, including by drawing on traditional arts and designs, in an ethical manner, as a basis for creativity.
- 3.2** Local artists and their work are given increased exposure through well-supported participation in domestic and international exhibitions and symposiums.

4 International Representation

For years, Solomon Islands has been entertaining and impressing international audiences with its diverse and unique cultures presented through group and individual performances and exhibitions. This trend promotes and presents images of the country to the international community. Continuous State support is necessary to promote the country's rich cultural diversity. But while international exposure helps build the country's image overseas, it is also necessary to protect its unique cultures from unethical exploitation.

Policy Goals

- 4.1** There is more support for and better coordination of Solomon Islands cultural entertainers and groups performing on the international stage.
- 4.2** There is increased focus on encouraging the inward flow of international visitors keen on seeing Solomon Islands cultures within Solomon Islands.

5 Arts and Music Education

An effective arts and music profile requires developing a rigorous and targeted education programme with emphasis on the country's youth. The setting up of focused institutions and the delivery of tailored education programmes will produce the country's next or future generation of artists. Future generations, if given such training, will engage in creating products that integrate and promote indigenous cultural art and music.

Policy Goals

- 5.1** Culture, arts and music are incorporated into the country's education curriculum in primary and secondary schools.
- 5.2** There is greater participation of youths and future generations in the culture sector as practitioners.

6 Scholarships and Human Resource Development

Building a strong cultural sector in the future depends on having an adequate pool of trained and qualified managers, producers and entrepreneurs. Successful implementation of policy requires the long-term input of experts and trained personnel, thus, investment by the State in the country's human resources.

Policy Goals

6.1. The country has an adequate pool of trained and qualified personnel specialising in various fields within the culture sector.

6.2. Youths are supported to undertake studies in culture sector fields through scholarships and specialised training opportunities.

7 Private Sector Investment

Realising the full economic potential of the culture sector requires the participation of the country's private sector, which has the requisite resources and capital to be a key partner in transforming the culture sector into a formal and more productive sector. Creative adaptation and transformation of cultural products that appeal to existing and future markets (domestic and international) requires research, innovation and support. This is an area that can be supported through private sector investment.

Policy Goals

7.1 There is substantial and ethical private sector investment in cultural industries.

7.2 There is increased production of high quality cultural goods for both domestic and international markets by local entrepreneurs.

8 Community-Based Enterprises

The culture sector provides the avenue for meaningful participation of indigenous and local communities in the country's economic development. The wealth of cultural resources should be harnessed and developed to meet contemporary society's socio-economic needs. Traditional owners of cultural resources (including traditional knowledge) should therefore be encouraged and supported to utilise such resources for the benefit of communities and the country in general.

Policy Goals

8.1. Vibrant cottage industries that utilise cultural resources as their primary product or commodity

8.2. Income and employment opportunities within rural communities have increased.

9 Cultural Tourism

The difficult task here is to design policy that advances together the touristic economy and the preservation and development of local cultures and languages

Ron Crocombe 1994

Cultural tourism holds huge potential in contributing in the near future to a flourishing tourism industry in the country. From a tourism perspective, the rich cultural diversity of the country is an asset that can be further developed, marketed and promoted as a key attraction. Cultural tourism provides the ideal avenue for effective participation of local communities and cultural resource owners in tourism development.

Policy Goals

9.1 Cultural tourism becomes the flagship of the country's tourism industry.

9.2 Community participation in cultural tourism leads to decentralisation and the spread of activities and benefits of the tourism industry throughout the provinces and rural areas

9.3 Economic benefits of the tourism industry are re-invested in rural areas hosting cultural tourism enterprises and activities.

10 Hospitality Industry

Hospitality establishments provide ideal venues for the promotion of Solomon Islands' unique diverse cultures. As hosts of international guests and visitors, they are the gateways for providing first impressions of the country's rich cultural diversity. It is therefore imperative that such establishments are encouraged through special measures to provide high quality cultural goods and services.

Policy Goals

10.1 The hospitality industry integrates culture as a mechanism for adding authentic and experiential value to their products and services for guests and visitors

10.2 Solomon Islands' indigenous culture and arts become an integral component of hospitality industry services (including in architecture, food and décor).

11 Finance and Incentives

Establishing a vibrant cultural industry and promoting its growth will require initial injection and investment of financial and technical resources. As an industry still in its infancy in the country, attracting new participants and investors is fundamental to its development and expansion.

Policy Goals

11.1 Capital and other financial incentives are designed and made accessible to Solomon Islanders to build their capacity to become cultural entrepreneurs and employers.

11.2 The cultural industry grows steadily to become a recognisable contributor to the country's economy.

12 Certification of Cultural Products

A steadily growing cultural industry will see an increase in the cross-border trade of Solomon Islands' indigenous cultural products. The originality and authenticity of such products must be protected to ensure Solomon Islanders derive maximum benefits from their cultural resources. It is imperative that such trade be accompanied by a corresponding system of certification, verification and authentication of Solomon Island cultural products.

Policy Goals

12.1 The cultural and legal rights of customary owners and producers of cultural products are protected within and outside Solomon Islands.

12.2 The production of counterfeit Solomon Islands cultural products overseas is minimised or prevented.

Section B

Kastom and Traditional Knowledge

...the heart of kastom is life as it is lived everyday: from the most mundane to the most sacred, through the philosophical and practical, constant reworking of knowledge and ways of thinking

David W. Gegeo 1994

13 Research and Documentation

As a culture thriving predominantly on oral tradition, much of the country's wealth of traditional knowledge risks being lost over time due to lack of research and documentation. Past research and documentation by Solomon Islanders is appreciated, but it needs to be built on. In this respect, Solomon Islanders must be encouraged through focused measures to play an active role in future cultural research and documentation.

Policy Goals

13.1 The country's culture and traditional knowledge are well and ethically researched, documented and made accessible to the country's future generations.

13.2 The research, documentation and publication of Solomon Islands culture and traditional knowledge are carried out primarily by Solomon Islanders and local institutions

14 Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in Traditional Knowledge

In the absence of an adequate protective regime, the country's indigenous cultures and traditional knowledge (TK) remain exposed to the risk of continued theft and misappropriation. As the trade in cultural products increases, the rights of customary owners of traditional knowledge must be protected through legal and non-legal measures. Further, the commercialisation of traditional knowledge is not without its ills, as individualism can set in at the cost of collective ownership of IPR. This must be prevented to ensure that customary owners and communities benefit equally and equitably from the use of their cultural resources. Similarly, traditional knowledge to which no individual claim can be proved must be treated as the *common heritage* of tribes, communities, islands, or cultural and linguistic groups.

Policy Goals

14.1 Customary owners of IPR in cultural art and TK derive maximum benefits from the utilisation of their cultural resources

14.2 Communities with equal claims to IPR in TK benefit equally and equitably

14.3 The legal rights of customary owners to TK are protected

15 Cultural Studies

The institutional transmission of traditional knowledge is fundamental to its long-term preservation and practice by the country's present and future generations. To that end, the teaching of culture in formal institutions must be encouraged to ensure the revival and regeneration of traditional value systems, practices, knowledge and skills deemed vital to building a stable society. Cultural studies must therefore be incorporated into the country's formal and informal education systems to foster creativity in traditional arts.

Policy Goals

15.1 Culture or traditional knowledge is revived and preserved through education

15.2 Traditional art, knowledge and values are taught to young generations to stimulate and re-establish interest in culture.

16 Kalsa Schools

Kalsa or *kastom* schools specialise in and are dedicated to the teaching and transmission of traditional knowledge and arts. More so, the content of their syllabi cover more detailed topics not readily or easily delivered in primary or secondary schools.

Such schools will use the services of cultural experts and leaders from their host communities. The establishment of such schools within rural areas will be a driving force for the revival of cultures that are on the verge of extinction.

Policy Goals

16.1 Permanent present and future institutions are established and strengthened for the teaching of culture and kastom to facilitate the transmission of traditional knowledge and values to younger generations.

16.2 Culture or kastom schools are mainstreamed into the country's education system

17 Indigenous Languages

The Solomon Islands has seen some of its indigenous languages becoming extinct in the recent past. The loss of purity of indigenous languages is becoming another area of concern. Of similar concern is the dwindling number of fluent speakers of each and every indigenous language. The introduction of a cultural studies curriculum provides the opportunity for the teaching of indigenous languages in education institutions, including *kastom* schools.

Policy Goals:

17.1 Indigenous languages are systematically revived and promoted through teaching of the same in schools nationwide

17.2 The publication and reproduction of Solomon Islands literature in indigenous languages is promoted.

18 Roles of Traditional Leaders and Chiefs

Traditional institutions and chiefs form an important part of the country's social fabric and community life. While they are recognised in the country's Constitution, they are largely left out of formal governance and administrative structures. Many of the pressing issues currently faced by the country, such as land disputes and ethnic tension, fall within the domain of traditional authority. It is imperative that chiefs and traditional leaders be given a role in the formal governance and administration of certain sectors of the country, such as land administration and traditional justice systems.

Policy Goals

18.1 Chiefs and traditional institutions are given a fundamental role in the governance and administration of land issues in a formalised traditional justice system.

18.2 Formally incorporated councils become agencies of the State for the codification and administration of kastom or customary law

19 Ancestral and Sacred Objects and Sites

The country's cultural landscape contains many precious ancestral objects and sacred sites. Unfortunately, many of these have been lost over time through destruction, sale, misappropriation and/or alienation. This heritage needs adequate protection, management and administration for the benefit of future generations.

Policy Goals

19.1 The country has a proper and effective system for the management and protection of ancestral and sacred objects and sites

19.2 The cultural heritage of the country is protected and preserved for the cultural education of today's youth and future generations

20 Kastom Compensation

The *kastom* practice of compensation or restitution runs the risk of further exploitation and abuse. Its misuse as a tool for appeasement for political purposes has altered its meaning, value and practice. For societies practising properly and meaningfully administered *kastom*, the cultural purpose of compensation is stability, peace and harmonious coexistence. *Kastom* compensation must be restored within the ambit of a traditional justice system to be administered by formally incorporated traditional authorities or chiefs. Timely action is necessary to ensure that future generations do not fall victim to its abuse and exploitation.

Policy Goals

20.1 The real kastom value of the compensation and restitution is recognised and appreciated by present and future generations

20.2 Kastom is properly administered and regulated as a fundamental part of a traditional justice system for building a peaceful and harmonious Solomon Islands

21 Bride-wealth

The *kastom* of bridewealth, while confined to only a few of the country's cultures, is now widely and generally accepted in those societies as integral to the recognition of marriages. While undergoing transformation owing to factors such as the influence of the cash economy, bridewealth, as in the case of compensation, is increasingly facing abuse and exploitation.

Policy Goals

21.1 The real kastom value of bridewealth is recognised and appreciated by present and future generations

21.2 Proper administration and regulation of the bridewealth is guaranteed through the intervention of formally incorporated traditional institutions

22 Traditional Justice Systems

The adoption and practice of punitive or retributive justice within the country's justice system is a product of its colonial legacy. This justice system does not always yield outcomes that are in harmony with indigenous cultures and values, or with rehabilitation. Good *kastom* practices that are coherent with cultural values and understandings of justice need to be integrated into the country's overall justice system. There is appreciable disconnect between traditional justice systems and western-oriented State-administered systems. An in-depth study into traditional justice systems and their relevance in addressing contemporary problems in society is vital for building a stable country in the future.

Policy Goals

- 22.1** Cultural practices and values that promote fairness and equality are formally recognised, applied and administered in the course of building a stable and harmonious society
- 22.2** Chiefs or traditional authorities formally assume the administration of traditional justice at the village level as an alternative to the not readily accessible State-administered justice system

23 Traditional or *Kastom* medicine

The wealth of traditional or *kastom* medicine and its practice in Solomon Islands are well known. Indigenous Solomon Islanders continue to appreciate the medicinal and spiritual values of *kastom* medicine as an alternative to western medicine. There is no doubt that *kastom* medicine also holds potential in the development of new drugs. The secrets or hidden qualities of *kastom* medicine need to be well researched and documented if the country is to protect and preserve its wealth of traditional knowledge in medicine. Given its potential in contributing to pharmaceutical research and to the development of new drugs, it is imperative that *kastom* medicine be accorded appropriate recognition within the country's health system.

Policy Goals

- 23.1** Research conducted into traditional medicine, leading to production of new pharmaceutical products under the guidance of a strong regulatory framework safeguarding traditional biological knowledge, innovation and practice
- 23.2** Equitable benefits from commercial exploitation of traditional knowledge in *kastom* medicine is derived by local communities and owners of such knowledge
- 23.3** Traditional medicine is given greater recognition and regulation as a form of medicine that is readily accessible to local communities

Section C

HERITAGE

...the cultural traditions of every society...constitute a vast and magnificent mosaic of the experience and knowledge cumulated globally: a collective human heritage that can be a source of wisdom and guidance in generations to come

Roger Keesing 1994

24 Archaeological Cultural and Historical Landscapes

Cultural landscapes of archaeological and historical value form an integral part of the country's rich historical heritage. These include prehistoric or early settlement sites and those associated with early contact with explorers, missionaries, traders and colonising agents. The country does not currently have a database that maps out the network of such landscapes throughout the country. Most sites remain vulnerable to loss from natural or man-made causes such as encroaching development and increasing demographic changes. The protection and development of these sites remain central for the promotion of historical knowledge, cultural education and cultural tourism.

Policy Goals

- 24.1** The country has a national database and effective system for the management and protection of cultural landscapes of archaeological and historical significance
- 24.2** Cultural landscapes of archaeological and historical value are integrated into cultural tourism development
- 24.3** Cultural education, historical knowledge and field research are enhanced and facilitated through the availability of well-protected and well-managed sites throughout the country

25 Cultural Centres

Cultural centres are currently confined to urban areas, even though culture and *kastom* have their roots in rural Solomon Islands. It is therefore important to establish a national network of multi-functional centres for the promotion of culture in its various forms. The centres should integrate the functions of museums, archives, entertainment centres, art galleries and *kastom* schools.

Policy Goals

- 25.1** Cultural centres are established across the nine provinces as a means of encouraging active community participation in the promotion and preservation of kalsa in all its forms
- 25.2** Cultural activities and initiatives at the community level are better coordinated and promoted, at least within the framework of provincial networks of cultural activities and programmes

26 *Kalsa* Calendar

The country's rich cultural diversity and wide geographical spread warrants proper mapping and planning to ensure annual cultural events and experiences are organised and offered in a coordinated manner. While some activities are seasonal and independent of government involvement, others require the assistance of the State. Cultural events in each of the country's nine provinces need to be revived and administered under permanent arrangements to achieve continuity and sustainability. A national calendar of annual cultural events that is properly coordinated would avoid a clash of events or timing, and encourage the development of cultural tourism.

Policy Goals

26.1 Cultural events are better coordinated, planned and managed and a national cultural calendar is developed

26.2 There is re-generation of interest and motivation in Indigenous culture among present and future generations through sustained cultural events

27 National Monuments and Naming

Memorials and monuments are living testimonies of the country's history and cultural heritage. And so is the use of local or indigenous words in the naming of streets, places, and physical structures of significance. To date, the country remains without a well-coordinated and administered network of monuments to honour its history. It is similarly without a labelling or naming system that uses local or indigenous words that identify, for instance, with a linguistic group's history and culture.

Policy Goals

27.1 The Country's history and cultural heritage is honoured and preserved to be appreciated by present and future generations through enhanced preservation of significant monuments.

27.2 Indigenous words or languages are preserved and given greater prominence in a well-administered naming or labelling system for streets and infrastructure

28 Private Collections

Collections of artefacts and cultural objects by private collectors or houses were common prior to the birth of state institutions such as the National Museum, Archives and Art Gallery. Such private initiatives should be encouraged and regulated. Promoting private collections encourages the amassing and safeguarding of otherwise forgotten, lost or destroyed cultural heritage. Such initiatives complement the functions of state agencies involved in cultural preservation and promotion. It is similarly important to regulate the potential exodus of sacred cultural objects held in private collections, as the same could well be conduits for the illicit trade in cultural products.

Policy Goals

28.1 Active participation of citizens and non-state entities in the preservation of the country's cultural heritage is fostered.

28.2 Private collections are promoted as essential players in cultural tourism and the culture industry generally

28.3 Private collections are effectively regulated to prevent movement of and illicit trade in valuable and sacred objects and artefacts

29 Repatriation of Artefacts and Remains

A large number of the country's authentic indigenous cultural artefacts, both sacred and artistic, are currently held overseas in museums, private collections and exhibition houses. Many of these cultural objects represent the remaining traces of the country's disappearing or extinct cultures. Their gradual or systematic repatriation would help re-stock and restore the country's cultural treasure. Similarly, cultural education, research and tourism would be enhanced with the availability of such repatriated cultural treasures. It is time for indigenous Solomon Islanders to reconnect with and reclaim their lost or stolen cultural heritage.

Policy Goals

29.1 Dialogue, understanding and partnerships are established with overseas institutions for the return of Solomon Islands indigenous cultural heritage

29.2 Repatriation is done within the framework of a well-administered and resourced system or programme involving governments and identified kastom owners of repatriated artefacts.

30 Media

The media are an ideal tool for cultural education, awareness, entertainment and promotion, and can play an active role in the promotion of indigenous cultures. There is at present a need for the development of media programmes on local arts and culture.

Policy Goals

30.1 Media establishments and/or producers undertake long-term documentation of indigenous culture and arts

30.2 The media assume an active role as strategic partners in the promotion and preservation of indigenous culture and arts

31 Libraries and information systems

The negligible volume of Solomon Islands literature or records in existing libraries is an issue of concern.

As centres of lifelong learning, libraries and information systems in the country need to be developed and resourced with local literature and records to promote cultural education and scholarly work in the country.

Policy Goals

- 31.1** The function of libraries and information systems to facilitate and enhance cultural education in Solomon Islands is strengthened.
- 31.2** Libraries are promoted as strategic repositories of documented traditional knowledge and culture

32 Cultural exchange

Formalised exchange programmes between peoples of different cultures, societies and countries foster understanding and appreciation of each others' cultures and practices. The Melanesian Arts Festival and the Festival of Pacific Arts are two Pacific events at which Solomon Islands regularly showcase its cultures. Cultural exchange programmes within the region should be developed as a means of fostering innovation, inter-cultural understanding and cordial relations between peoples.

Policy Goals

- 32.1** Enhance appreciation of the Pacific's rich cultural diversity through State-supported cultural exchange programmes and exhibitions.
- 32.2** Solomon Islands present and future artists and cultural practitioners gain regional and international exposure through regular cultural exchange programmes.

33 Role of Religion and Churches

"The Church forms the focus for community life [in Solomon Islands]"

Ben Burt 1994

The Christian religion and its teachings have been interwoven into Solomon Islands culture and society for years. More recently, smaller religious groups such as Islam and Buddhism have become established in the country. Religious tolerance between religions adds splendour to the country's diversity and should be enhanced. But religious institutions should not be fronts for the suppression of traditional culture. Rather, they need to promote cultural values that are compatible with their own teachings and doctrines. The integration of cultural elements in religious worship, hymns and architectural styles is an encouraging trend associated with some Christian denominations, and should be promoted.

Similarly, the running of faith-based schools and rural training centres throughout the country make those institutions, subject to compatibility of values, ideal avenues for cultural education in the future.

Policy Goals

33.1 The involvement of religious institutions in the preservation and promotion of culture and traditional values is facilitated.

33.2 Understanding and the harmonisation of religious teachings are enhanced with kastom values.

Part IV GOVERNANCE & ADMINISTRATION

A Governance

The wide scope of the Policy Framework makes it impracticable to put all responsibilities for implementation on the Division of Culture. There are numerous areas within the Framework that do not fall automatically under the jurisdiction of the Division. The governance of the culture sector will bring together not only existing State institutions, but also the private sector, NGOs, churches and organisations, all with a vested interest in culture.

To ensure the new directions introduced by this Framework are well managed, it is, however, necessary to bring implementation under centralised coordination and oversight. The need for a statutory body, namely, a Cultural Commission with wide powers and mandate over the culture sector, is thus recommended. Its roles functions and powers should be clearly identified in the enabling legislation. Additionally, a Traditional Forum dealing with Kastom should be established.

1 Culture Commission

Establishing a Culture Commission is vital for long term development of the culture sector. An institutional arrangement similar to the current partnership between the Tourism Division and the Solomon Islands Visitors Bureau is recommended.² As a statutory body, the Commission will be largely responsible for the promotion and regulation of the culture sector. The Culture Division will be responsible for policy matters as devised by political governments of the day. The reasons for having the Commission are multiple, a few of which can be summarised as follows:

² The Solomon Islands Visitors Bureau is a statutory body, established by the Solomon Islands Visitors Bureau Act 1996, and is responsible for development promotion and regulation of the tourism industry.

- the long term development of the cultural sector warrants having a permanent and dedicated statutory body that has an appreciable degree of autonomy, integrity and independence in administering the sector.
- the traditional functions of the Division of Culture are limited as it cannot, in practice, encroach into other areas that fall within the institutional mandate of other government departments.
- the Commission is a substitute for *ad hoc* bodies with fewer accountability structures for the purposes of administering and having oversight over cultural events and programmes in the future.³
- The Division of Culture does not venture into self-financing mechanisms. The Commission, as a partly autonomous statutory body, will have an investment portfolio to raise revenue to fund its operations and projects for development of the Culture sector.

Further, the functions, roles and powers of the Commission will be broadly defined in the enabling legislation to capture all areas within the Policy Framework. Analogous to an *umbrella* body overlooking a wide sector, the functions of the Commission will be multi-pronged. It will similarly be responsible for specialised cultural institutions undertaking different roles identified with **Sections A–C** of the Policy Framework. These will include, for instance, heritage institutions, artists’ organisations and establishments, and those looking after the interest and role of chiefs.

In a nutshell, the roles, functions and powers of the Commission may include:

- 1 facilitating processes for coordination and review of Policy implementation processes;
- 2 generating revenue and raising funds for long-term implementation of the Policy Framework through its investment portfolio;
- 3 playing an advisory role to Government on cultural policy;
- 4 regulating the role of chiefs and *kastom* institutions in the administration of *kastom* and traditional value systems;
- 5 having statutory oversight over cultural or other institutions aligned to its structure;
- 6 licensing and regulating the trade in cultural products and the movement of sacred objects and artefacts;
- 7 formulating or approving standards or codes for cultural practitioners, producers, consumers and traders, etc.;
- 8 developing and regulating cultural studies curricula and *kastom* schools;

³ The national organising Committee of the 2012 Festival of Pacific Arts hosted by the country is a classic demonstration of such an *ad hoc* body.

- 9 regulating research and documentation of Solomon Islands cultures and traditional knowledge;
- 10 undertaking cultural infrastructure development;
- 11 designing and/or endorsing cultural projects.

Funding sources for the Commission will include State grants or subventions, service fees, royalties from books or publications published under its authority, revenue from investments, and development partner assistance. In any event, the Commission as a body with a certain degree of autonomy will apply the cost-recovery or user-pay principle in defraying its operational costs. Furthermore, some of its statutory functions and services will warrant the imposition of fees and charges such as licensing, registration, issuing of research permits, and the certification or labelling of cultural products.

2 Traditional leaders' forum

In order to address the areas listed under **Section B** (*Kastom and Traditional Knowledge*) of the Framework, it is recommended that a traditional leaders' forum be established. To minimise costs and ensure centralising the coordination of implementation activities and programmes, the forum should be aligned to and fall under the regulatory powers of the Commission. This will ensure that the forum has access, for instance, to the expertise and technical resources of the Commission.

B Administration

- **Ministry of Culture and Tourism**

The Ministry shall be the State agency responsible for facilitating and administering the initial implementation phase of this Policy Framework. And partnering with the Ministry through the Division of Culture will be its constituent statutory or aligned bodies, namely, the National Museum, the National Archive, and the National Art Gallery — all of which shall take lead roles in areas within their respective institutional competences.

- **Culture Commission**

The proposed commission should play a key role in the implementation and review of this Policy Framework. The executive body of the Commission should meet annually to assess matters, including targets achieved as per the Framework. Membership of the Commission should comprise Government, civil society and private sector representatives.

- **Lead Agencies Meeting**

The lead agencies meeting will comprise all agencies identified in the strategic plan.

Such lead agencies will meet bi-annually to ensure coordination and harmonisation of projects and programmes, as well as review the implementation of the Policy Framework. Each lead agency should also establish and facilitate meetings of sub-committees, consisting of stakeholders concerned with each policy component.

C Monitoring and review

The Policy Framework shall be reviewed every five years to assess and evaluate the successes and shortfalls in its design and implementation. Ongoing monitoring shall be undertaken by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in conjunction with the Commission through the course of each five-year period. Periodic reports — annual and five-year periods — should be prepared jointly by the Commission and the Ministry prior to each review for evaluation by stakeholders at workshops convened every five years.

At the end of each review period, the strategic plan should be revised to reflect the progress of implementation and incorporate, where necessary, recommendations arising out of such reviews. Lead agencies for respective policy components and their cluster groups or stakeholders are also required to submit progress reports at least annually to the Commission and the Ministry.

Part V FUNDING and RESOURCING

While the Solomon Islands Government is the principal party to this Policy Framework, it cannot achieve the policy objectives without assistance. It needs to explore and establish cooperative partnerships and alliances with all stakeholders and partners, both domestic and international, for the mobilisation of resources. The following sources will be explored and/or utilised for financing and resourcing this Policy Framework.

A Public sector financing and resourcing

The Government will liaise with agencies (departmental and ministerial) in the matter of making public resources (financial and technical) available for the implementation of this Framework. Through this mechanism, each ministry, department or statutory body with responsibility for implementing a specific policy will be responsible for projects associated with such a policy under its annual development budget. Similarly, the expertise available within the public sector will be utilised by all ministries or departments involved in the implementation of a particular policy.

Further, the Government will look at possibilities of establishing and initially resourcing a foundation or trust for development of the country's arts and culture. The cultural foundation will be managed by the Commission, which may invest the funds in such investments or securities as it may consider necessary and secure.

This is to ensure revenue is generated for financial sustainability in the long term. The mechanics of the concept will be the subject of legislative innovation and development.

B Development partners

Collaborative partnerships need to be pursued by the Government with its traditional and potential development partners. These are stakeholders whose support will be needed for the long term implementation of the Framework. Similarly, support and assistance of the international community is crucial and needs to be tapped into. It must be highlighted that prioritising the sector will guarantee funding for development of the culture sector by some development partners such as the European Development Fund for which ACP members are eligible.

Moreover, certain organisations operating domestically have strong links with and are supported by development partners and the international community. Such links should be explored for the possibility of engaging those well-supported organisations as partners in the implementation of this Policy Framework.

C The private sector

The private sector is a strategic partner in realising the objectives and vision of this Policy Framework. The Government will introduce innovative mechanisms including tax incentives and subsidies for encouraging participation and investment of the private sector in cultural industries. Development and facilitation of new markets, both domestic and international, will also be explored to attract private sector investment in the cultural sector.

D Others

Non-government organisations (NGOs), churches and other private organisations have been active players in community development throughout the years. Given the potential of developing a culture-based cottage industry at the community level, the expertise of such organisations in project development and sourcing of funds can be utilised. Collaborative and cooperative partnership between the Government and these organisations is thus vital for implementation of the Policy Framework at the community level.

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