



# REGENERATIVE VANUA

Paving the way for a regenerative future

## **Enhancing Inclusivity and accessibility for Indigenous host destinations through Regenerative Agritourism**

**Dr Cherise Addinsall**

University of the Sunshine Coast; Australian Centre for Pacific Islands Research; Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research;  
Strategic Support Regenerative Vanua

**Regenerative Vanua acknowledges and pays respect to the Indigenous peoples of the large ocean states of the Pacific, and their continuing connection to the Pacific ocean, their lands, their cultures and their communities.**

**Regenerative Vanua** is a Not-for-Profit organisation formally registered in 2021 as a Charitable Organisation under the Charitable Associations (Incorporations) Act [Cap 140] in Vanuatu.

**Regenerative Vanua's Vision is to:**

*"Support climate smart resilient rural Indigenous communities by restoring pride in Indigenous food culture and strengthening connection to Vanua through regenerative agritourism".*



# The term Vanua can be described as:

"the land area one is identified with, [which encompasses] the people, their traditions and customs, beliefs and values, and the various other institutions established for the sake of achieving harmony, solidarity and prosperity within a particular social context. [...] It provides a sense of identity and belonging. [...] The vanua [...] is an extension of the concept of the self. (Ravuvu, 1983).



# Regenerative: builds on from sustainable it doesn't replace it

Enhancing wellbeing through adaptation to climate changes is key to the regenerative movement.

If the wellbeing of the people, communities and the land are improving then it is regenerative.

**Chief Freddy Wilson, Maewo** *“If you benefited at the expense of anyone or anything including future generations you are not regenerative. It’s more than just minimising impact or only leaving footprints, it’s about transformative experiences between host and guest that contributes to the regeneration of each others vanua, (their places, communities and self)”*.

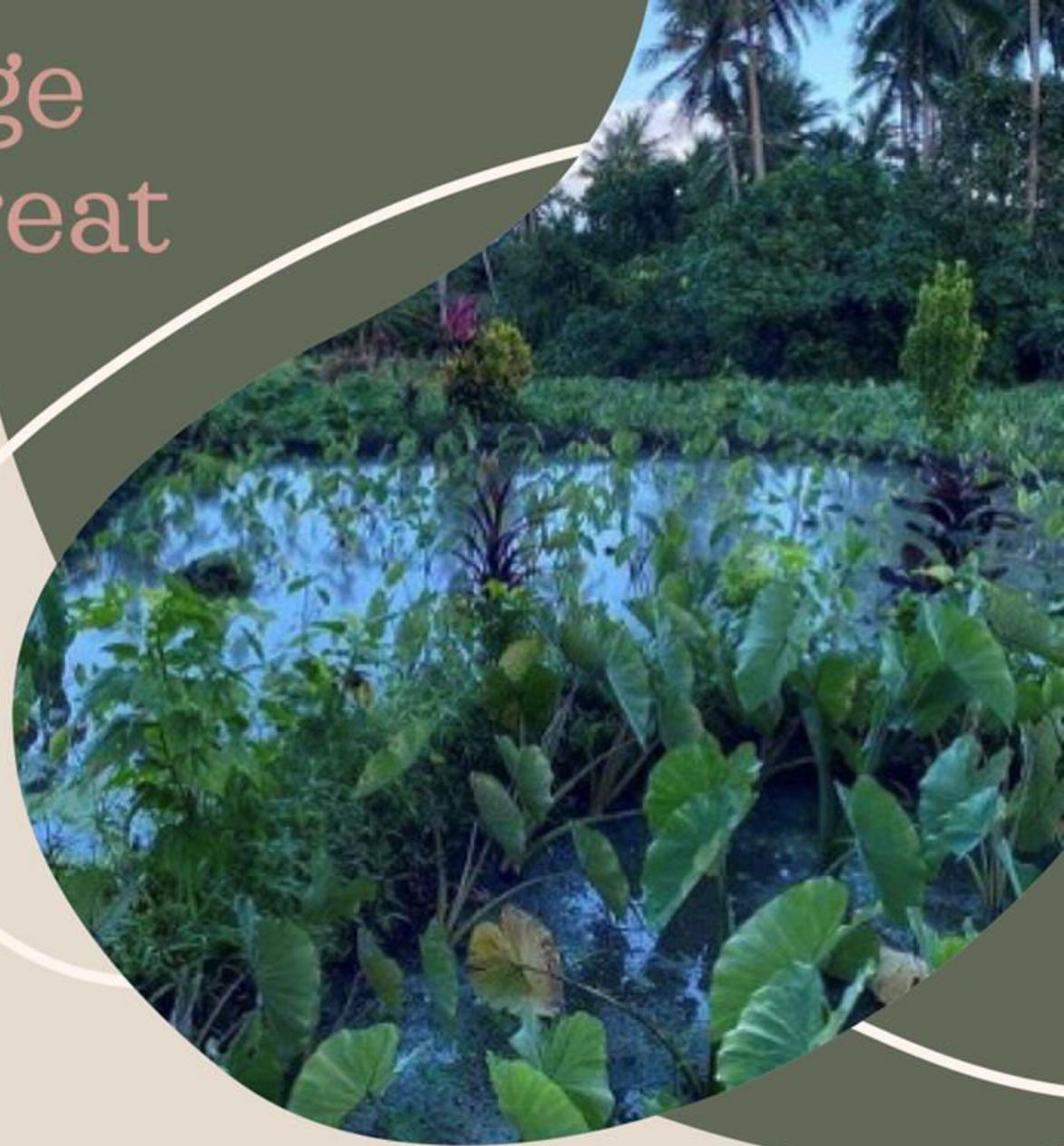


# Indigenous Knowledge Systems are under threat

People are leaving their Vanua through increased urbanisation which is driven by tourism (mostly foreign owned and managed) and the need to access services such as health care etc.

Urbanisation is increasing vulnerability and impacting on resilience....

- High dependence on imported foods and soaring food import bills
- Decrease in the consumption and availability of local, fresh food
- Increased Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), (with over 20% of the adult population suffering with diabetes)
- Land tenure disputes, and breakdown of social reciprocal systems (Vanua) that have sustained Ni Vanuatu society for millennia.



# Regenerative Indigenous Agritourism

## DEFINITION

“Regenerative Indigenous Agritourism is an ecologically and socially inclusive model of agritourism that is based on the interpretation of climate smart regenerative traditional agroecosystems which exhibit cultural and heritage significance and support climate resilience.

Regenerative Indigenous operators act as ambassadors of transformational journeys to decolonise and regenerate their Vanua. Experiences are not primarily for international visitors, the operator acts as a regenerative ambassador tailoring regenerative experiences aimed at supporting positive behaviour change and connection to Vanua in local youth, community and domestic tourists”.



*Tourism has the potential to be a transformative force for social and economic development, but for it to truly serve its purpose, it must be inclusive and accessible.*

Regenerative Vanua believes for tourism to be transformative... inclusivity and accessibility must apply to both host and guest



Regenerative Agritourism is a strategy to support meaningful engagement of Indigenous people in tourism by attracting visitors to rural areas for transformational experiences with Indigenous people in their Vanua

# Enhancing accessibility for host and guest

Rural areas are inaccessible to both Indigenous peoples and visitors with disabilities

Regenerative Vanua has developed the first standards for accessible and inclusive agritourism to be piloted in Vanuatu and later rolled out in the Pacific.

Improving accessibility for visitors with disabilities also improves the quality of life for Indigenous host communities.



# The Pacific public health Emergency

Pacific Island countries have the highest rates of diet-related non-communicable diseases (DR-NCDs) globally.

Over 20% of the adult population are suffering with diabetes.

For example: Two legs a week are amputated in Vanuatu, in a population of 300,000 people.

This figure increases in countries such as Tonga and Samoa.



# Regenerative Vanua preventative approach

Many Indigenous people with disabilities are forced to relocate to urban areas to access health services etc.

The flow on effect: family shifts to an urban lifestyle which is increasing the number of people with disabilities and the cycle begins.

**Through our programs we are:**

Supporting Indigenous agritourism operators to meet accessibility standards, which enables people with disabilities to remain in their Vanua.

Working with Indigenous Agritourism operators to be ambassadors for Indigenous local farming and food systems.



# thank you

Dr Cherise Addinsall

[caddinsall@usc.edu.au](mailto:caddinsall@usc.edu.au)

