

FORMAT FOR THE SUBMISSION OF STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORTS BY THE STATE PARTIES (ANNEX 13 OF THE OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES)

East Rennell World Heritage Site, Solomon Islands: Identification number)

1. Executive Summary of the Report.

[Note: each of the sections described below should be summarized. The maximum length of the executive summary is 1 page.]

East Rennell World Heritage Site remains on the List of World Heritage in Danger. As reported in 2017, the forest seem to be in good condition and unspoiled forest cover remains at 95% of land area within the ERWHS and at 90% in other parts of Rennell Island and that no logging has occurred within the property.

Awareness of the 2010 National Protected Areas Act was done with the hope of informing landowners of the need to protect the World Heritage Site. Registering ERWHS site under Protected Areas Act is slow since through enforcement of the Act requires the approval of the about 80 landowner groups, since the ERWHS is under customary ownership.

In the roundtable discussion with the Landowners it was confirmed that people of East Rennell are still in support of having Lake Tengano as the World Heritage Site. The main argument from the Lake Tengano World Heritage Site Association and customary landowners was, they would like to see the Government of Solomon Islands prioritising its development in that areas so that it can benefit the livelihood of the rural people including landowners.

It was also obvious in the roundtable meeting the Government Ministries and some local and international organisations would like to implement livelihood projects in East Rennell and therefore, it important that people of East Rennell are united in how they perceive assistance in terms of financial projects whether big or small it must be acknowledged as an assistance for the people of East Rennell.

Although roundtable dialogue also focused on sorting out landowners issues, there has been some disagreements amongst Tuhunui Tribe of East Rennell which a complaint letter was sent to World Heritage Committee indicating tribe withdraw all of its customary land from the World Heritage Program Site in East Rennell. This issue was noted by World Heritage

Committee which is why there will be a joint World Heritage Centre / IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to East Rennell in Solomon Islands to dialogue with Tuhunui tribe and assess how this issue can be addressed considering their right to self-determination.

The government of Solomon Islands through its responsible Ministries has noted the development plan agreed on during the Round table dialogue. Though implementing the plan need financial resources and taking slow progress, it is a plan that Minister of Environment as the focal point, would like to see that it is being implemented.

Indeed, the development of alternative income generating mechanisms is still a top priority but will require substantial international support, in particular with regard to the development of eco-tourism and small business enterprises.