

 Early Warning System

ADB-59142-005

Tamtam Submarine Cable Project



Quick Facts

Countries	Vanuatu
Specific Location	Port Vila - Lifou (New Caledonia)
Financial Institutions	Asian Development Bank (ADB)
Status	Approved
Bank Risk Rating	B
Voting Date	2026-02-10
Borrower	Prima Limited Vanuatu
Sectors	Communications
Investment Type(s)	Grant, Loan
Loan Amount (USD)	\$ 4.50 million
Grant Amount (USD)	\$ 1.90 million



Project Description

According to the Bank's website, ADB's proposed \$6.4 million facility will fund in part the \$26.76 million project cost, comprising the design, supply, marine deployment, and commissioning of the 411-kilometer Tamtam submarine fiber cable to connect Port Vila, Vanuatu to Lifou, New Caledonia, France.

The proposed Tamtam Cable System will connect Lifou, New Caledonia, to Port Vila, Vanuatu and, in turn, Australia and Fiji providing redundancy to the Interchange Cable Network 1 (ICN1) cable system installed in 2014.

The Tamtam System will be one of the world's first Science Monitoring and Reliable Telecommunications (SMART) cable systems which, as well as providing much needed telecommunications redundancy, will enhance seismic monitoring in the Pacific region. The system will include four Climate Change Nodes (CC Nodes) to facilitate real-time monitoring of seismic activities and tsunami detection, particularly in the seismically volatile New Hebrides Trench which lies between Vanuatu and New Caledonia. The proposed technology will provide an early warning system, enhancing security and preparedness for natural disasters.

The Tamtam System will contain three active fibre optic pairs with repeaters with a design life of 25 years, supplied by ASN and deployed by OMS. One fibre pair is reserved for commercial telecommunications bandwidth, including the Government of Vanuatu (GoV). Two pairs are contracted to Pacific Peering/France to support the SMART environmental and scientific sensor data gathering and analysis.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) is partly funding the design, supply, marine deployment and commissioning of the 411 km cable from Lifou to Port Vila, Éfaté as part of the Tamtam Submarine Cable Project.



Early Warning System Project Analysis

According to the Initial Environmental and Social Examination:

Environment: Category B. While CH status is triggered, there is overall low impact risk as CH can be avoided. Where potential adverse environmental impacts are unavoidable they are localised and site-specific, few if any of them are irreversible, and mitigation measures can be readily implemented to further reduce risk.

Involuntary Resettlement: Category C. No physical or economic displacement. Project component only relates to cable laying activities, and no land will be required under this scope of funding. C Relevant sea access will be required.

Indigenous Peoples: Category C. Ethnic indigenous groups (including ni-Vanuatu and Kanak) in the proximity of the cable landing locations in Pango and Lifou are not deemed to be distinctive and vulnerable in the context of potential Project impacts.



Investment Description

- Asian Development Bank (ADB)

Loan (Ordinary capital resources): USD 4.50 million

Grant (Asian Development Fund): USD 1.90 million



Private Actors Description

Prima Limited is a Vanuatu-based telecommunications and data infrastructure company that operates submarine cables, satellite teleports, and terrestrial fiber networks. It is known for maintaining the ICN1 subsea cable and is currently developing the 411-kilometer Tamtam submarine cable system to connect Vanuatu and New Caledonia, featuring advanced SMART sensors for early hazard warnings.



Private Actor 1	Private Actor 1 Role	Private Actor 1 Sector	Relation	Private Actor 2	Private Actor 2 Role	Private Actor 2 Sector
-	-	-	-	Prima Limited Vanuatu	Client	-



Contact Information

No contacts available at the time of disclosure.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

You can submit an information request for project information at: <https://www.adb.org/forms/request-information-form>

ADB has a two-stage appeals process for requesters who believe that ADB has denied their request for information in violation of its Access to Information Policy. You can learn more about filing an appeal at: <https://www.adb.org/site/disclosure/appeals>

ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM OF ADB

The Accountability Mechanism is an independent complaint mechanism and fact-finding body for people who believe they are likely to be, or have been, adversely affected by an Asian Development Bank-financed project. If you submit a complaint to the Accountability Mechanism, they may investigate to assess whether the Asian Development Bank is following its own policies and procedures for preventing harm to people or the environment. You can learn more about the Accountability Mechanism and how to file a complaint at: <http://www.adb.org/site/accountability-mechanism/main>.



Bank Documents

- [Tamtam Submarine Cable Project: Initial Environmental and Social Examination](#)

Media

- [ADB, Prima Sign Landmark Cable Deal to Boost Connectivity and Disaster Resilience in Vanuatu](#)
- [Vanuatu's 2nd Undersea Cable to Double as a Disaster Early Warning System](#)



Other Related Projects

- ADB-59142-003 Support for a Differentiated Approach to Private Sector Projects in the Pacific (Subproject 1)
- ADB-59142-001 ADB Wayfinder (Pacific) Program
- ADB-59142-002 Support for a Differentiated Approach to Private Sector Projects in the Pacific