



MEDIA RELEASE

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Voluntary customary land registration system needs to be effective

There is a need to improve the effectiveness of the Voluntary Customary Land Registration (VCLR) system in Papua New Guinea (PNG), according to a PNG National Research Institute (PNG NRI) Spotlight article.

The article, [*Understanding how the effectiveness of voluntary customary land registration system can be improved*](#), by Research Fellow, [Logea Nao](#), stated that the VCLR system in PNG is not user friendly and not well understood by landowners.

The VCLR system is a set of processes by which landowners can register their land and therefore, bring it onto the formal land market as a means to engage in legal transactions. The system is administered by the Department of Lands and Physical Planning and involves incorporation of land group and registration of customary land.

Incorporation of land group is the phase during which a land group is given formal recognition under the law that it claims rights to the identified portions of land and other forms of property listed on an applicant land group's property listing.

Registration of customary land is the phase which involves registration of a portion of land identified under the property listing of an ILG during the land group incorporation phase.

Since 2005, landowners have been encouraged to register their land and receive a title. The option to register customary land is voluntary, it stated.

The article stated that the VCLR is important in securing customary land because it promotes exclusivity and inheritance of ownership, protects customary land from land grabbing, promotes business and investment, and increases the value of land.

The article suggested that in order to improve the VCLR system, the Government should consider improving customary land administration, streamlining the process, decentralising the process to districts and provinces, subsidising surveying fees and encouraging mapping of all land in each district and province.

The Spotlight Article can be accessed on the PNG NRI website <https://www.pngnri.org>.

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