



Regional Project: Mapping and Enhancing Natural Resources Governance in Small Island Communities

Coastal ecosystems play a defining role for human food security and wellbeing. This is especially important for small islands, many of which are faced with limited resource base, logistical challenges and rising pressure from economic development. This project seeks to enable and support natural resource governance on small islands that integrates and builds on the respective strengths of local and community-based management as well as national policy and legal frameworks at different levels. It is being implemented in **Maldives, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Thailand**.

The Specific Objectives of the project are:

Objective 1: To generate a detailed understanding of natural resource governance frameworks and identify opportunities for governance change on small islands in target countries.

Objective 2: To support governance reforms by building capacity and supporting processes of change in governance at appropriate levels in the target countries.

Expected results

The aim of the project is to generate up-to-date knowledge on the national and sub-national frameworks for governance of natural resources, increasing our understanding of the existing capacities and knowledge gaps at national and local level for increased community participation in natural resource governance. In particular, the outputs of the projects are:

- National review reports (Maldives, Seychelles, Sri Lanka & Thailand) and a regional synthesis report on natural resource governance frameworks including opportunities for specific natural resource governance reform, and capacity needs assessment focusing on communities and local government.
- Resource toolkit for community involvement in natural resource governance in small islands.
- Report on capacity building and pilot-scale demonstration interventions for small-island natural resource governance reform.
- Communication materials that synthesize project lessons and outputs.

The project was developed in response to the request by the four countries for support in mapping natural resources governance frameworks and enabling public participation. Lessons from this project will be shared with MFF members and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region facing similar challenges.

The project is implemented by the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** in collaboration with key **National Partners** in the four project countries:

- UNDP Maldives
- Seychelles National Park Authority
- IUCN Sri Lanka
- IUCN Thailand

Project budget: USD 200,000

Duration: January 2013-December 2014

Maldives: In the Maldives, the project, whose target site has not yet been identified, will explore the current decentralization processes in the context of governance of natural resources on small islands.

Seychelles: Focusing on the district of **Bel Ombre, located in the North of Mahe Island**, the project will work on empowering **local communities** to take active role in the local decision-making and will build partnerships with the **private sector** for investing in resilient and sustainable coast line.

Sri Lanka: The coastal and marine environment of **Delft Island in Northern Sri Lanka** is a main source of livelihoods for its residents. The project will work with the **national and local government** and **with local communities** to strengthen the governance of natural resources and to ensure that the island's traditional and customary practices are considered in the decision-making processes.

Thailand: In Thailand, the project will focus on **Koh Tao, a popular diving spot in the Gulf of Thailand**. The project will strengthen ongoing **community initiatives** and will work with **national and local decision-makers** to increase the public participation in governing and managing the island's natural resources.

This project is part of the **Regional Initiatives funded by the Mangroves for the Future**, designed in an effort to consolidate existing knowledge and best practice in coastal resource management, and conduct research on emerging issues, such as: mangrove conservation; coastal erosion; community resilience; governance in small island communities; and responsible diving.

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