

# Mangroves for the Future

## Twelfth Regional Steering Committee Meeting (RSC-12)

### Progress Report

Maldives

Period of December 2014 to October 2015

#### 1. Key Actions Taken by the National Coordinating Body

##### I. Regional Projects

###### a. Mapping project

Under the current phase, the Maldives National University (MNU) completed the activities and the second phase focused on capacity building plan for which training material was outlined and drafted. It was slated to be decided later whether MNU will go ahead with the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the project or to assign another implementing agency. Reports of the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the project were handed to UNEP for their commentary and approval.

###### b. Green Fin

Green Fin is a regional project which promotes environment friendly diving and snorkelling. Maldives has successfully implemented the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the project and there are 25 partners who are practicing the code of Green Fin in the Maldives. There are 15 codes of conducts. Five places in the Maldives are under assessment for top rank. Practicing these conducts by the dive operators/resorts increases their chances for international tourism awards. The project was formulated to implement in Malé atoll, but through coordinating from IUCN Marine project, Green Fin was implement in Ari atoll as well. The NCB suggested capturing and advocating the success story of Green Fin through media in integration with rest of MFF programme activities.

##### II. Work Plan

Work plan activities were discussed earlier in the year and the major activities were assigned to respective members. These NCB members were to oversee and assist closely the implementation of these activities with the MFF team. The activities included:

- National forum for scientific research in the Maldives
- Engaging with the private sector
- Workshop and demonstration on sustainable utilisation of mangrove resources for livelihood activities



- Waste management training workshop for target groups - recycling
- Technical Workshop on Soft Engineering Solutions to coastal problems: for policy makers and technical personnel in all related institutions
- Revision of KMC strategy for MFF Phase 3 and promotional Material
- Outreach activities to share the lesson learnt from SGP
- MFF knowledge materials and activities on 'World Environment Day 2015' and on other environmentally significant occasions

### III. Integrated Coastal Management Training Course

The NCB was briefed on the ICM requirement and is pending decision on how to do the assessment for the training course, whether through a partner or UNDP (MFF), and to identify an implementing university/college.

The NCB recommend the MFF programme to lead the assessment with the MNU Research Centre. The NCB's member representing MNU mentioned this may be possible if MFF could hire research assistance for a few months. Once the assessment is complete and needs are identified, then the NCB would decide on the implementing partner.

### IV. Resilience Analysis Report

The members were of the opinion that the Resilience Analysis Report, in its current iteration, was not very clear on its utility or its context. And some members highlighted the absence of government stakeholders input into the report. They also commented on the weakness of some of the presented strategies and how the document reads as a stand-alone without reflecting on potential opportunities.

However, the NCB agreed if the report fit the purpose then it is good to go ahead. And it was recommended to circulate the report through NCB member to relevant departments of Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Fisheries to do a fact checked before sending the report for revision to the consultant. This revision was received in August 2015 and was circulated to the NCB for commentary and final approval.

### V. National Forum for Scientific Research in the Maldives

MFF discussed the scientific forum with IUCN Regenerate Project that plans to have a similar forum in 2015. The members discussed the pros and cons of having a partnership forum highlighting the objectives of such a forum for MFF. In the end, it was decided that the Regenerate Project's forum was different and recommendation was made to organise the forum independently to achieve its initial objectives. This was to encourage science-based research among locals and Maldivian students rather than seeking attention of international researchers.

The NCB discussed the symposium concept to focus on the central theme (marine science) and sub-themes (sustainable fisheries and mariculture, coral reef conservation and management, natural and anthropogenic impacts on the marine environment, other related marine research). The thematic areas were decided to be identified based on the reception of ideas (they are to be clustered around a central theme).

## VI. Private Sector Initiatives

From the proposed activities of MFF for private sector engagement, *Anantara* resort choose to go ahead with coral reef monitoring and creating a web database. After initial background research and consultation with relevant stakeholders, MFF learnt that there are various existing efforts similar to this. And it was noted that the Environment Ministry's CCTF project had a good platform on coral reef monitoring and data collection, where MFF could collaborate. Potential areas for collaborations included; training on monitoring and data collecting for designated people (*Anantara* divers or others involved), monitoring tool kit for *Anantara* Resorts and TOT on monitoring and data collecting if CCTF was willing to collaborate on this activity or decided to give implementation of ToT to MFF.

## VII. Priority Areas for Huvadho Atoll

The NCB discussed and approved the following thematic areas for *Huvadho* atoll (MFF's current geographic focal area for the Maldives) call for proposals. They include:

- Sustainable bait fishing practices and best practices to increase the survival of baits
- Encourage fish processing, value adding among local communities
- Promote sustainable reef fishing for market needs
- Awareness on the negative use of chemical for farming, pesticide use, and best practices of locally sourced organic farming
- Native and climate resilient crops and best practices marketing
- Recommendations and identification of potential areas for MPA
- Policy recommendation for SEA through private sector engagement (NCB work plan)
- Integrating educational institutes, school children and youth in environmental awareness, protection and development activities
- shoreline prevention and soft measures
- Wetland and mangrove conservation through livelihood activities
- Encouraging traditional livelihood activities of communities through sustainable harvesting and use of forest/plant/other natural resources (*e.g.* cottage & craft sector which will have demand from tourism & souvenir trade)

Cross-cutting thematic areas:

- Sustainable financing
- Gender integration
- Awareness and Capacity building
- Partnership and networking
- Climate change

The NCB recommended to further revise and consolidate the thematic areas with the subcommittee.

### VIII. Regional Task Force on Turtles

A request by IUCN was received in the reporting period asking MFF to participate in setting up a regional taskforce assigned with protecting turtles in the north Indian Ocean (NIO) region consisting of Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the Maldives.

Considering that the Maldives was already signatory to a moratorium on capturing and killing turtles and seeing that no other country seems to have been involved in the taskforce as of yet, the NCB advised to check with the Ministry of Fisheries on existing MOUs pertaining to *Testudine* protection as well as requesting for more details on what exactly assisting or joining the taskforce will entail in terms of utilising financial and other resources. (The moratorium on turtle conservation in the Maldives will end in 2016 and this workshop will provide information on extension of this moratorium beyond the same year).

Following further discussion with the Fisheries Ministry member, the NCB agreed to support the workshop, as this fell within the programme of work of MFF in the Maldives. The NC informed Marine Research Centre needs about USD 10,000 to go ahead with the workshop. UNDP-LECRd has agreed to contribute USD 5,000 to this activity and MFF could allocate about USD 4,000 from NCB budget (NCB meeting budget and technical meeting budget) to this activity. The rest of the workshop cost will be in-kind from Government and private sector.

### IX. Gender Integration Training in Trat, Thailand (April 2015)

During the reporting period, the members were briefed on a gender integration training before being presented with an action plan for gender integration into MFF programming. It was recommended that PCM trainings incorporate ideas on gender integration especially pertaining to the decision-making process of women. A training session was suggested for the NCB and this would be led by the member and MFF staff who participated in the workshop – the same group would also provide input subsequent to project conceptualisations and guide the NCB during PCM trainings. A guideline for evaluation considering gender-centric issues and themes would be created. This would be done while ensuring that experiences and



lessons learnt from past projects are reflected; while a member cautioned that MFF should not lose focus from its core thematic areas while addressing gender issues – i.e. it should be an integrated approach.

Another suggestion was for monitoring proponents and establishing criteria that could possibly ascertain a gender-balanced allocation of grants allowing for equal partnership of women in the MFF programming modality.

Ultimately, the NCB recommended that the action plan be revised incorporating the issues and concerns of its membership and this to be circulated prior to being discussed and finalised in the next meeting.

#### X. Private Sector Engagement Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand (April 2015)

The members were briefed on this meeting and an action plan was shared highlighting private sector engagement in MFF programming. The discussions drew emphasis on SME involvement – especially entities which were not already involved in environmental initiatives. The NCB decided that in addition to the tourism and fisheries industries, the construction industry should be targeted as it deals with environmental aspects including shore protection. They also remarked on how this could be used as a platform to improve public engagement.

#### XI. LECReD Small Grant Facility

In 2015, a decision was made by UNDP's management to assign its Low Emission Carbon Resilience Development (LECreD) Small Grant Facility (USD 460,000 to be delivered in 1 year) to the MFF's existing small grants' modality. LECReD project staff including its manager and small grants officer made a brief presentation on the project, its objectives, its scope, proposed activities, grant disbursement mechanism and role of the MFF NCB.

Following the presentation, the NCB advised proper dissemination of information to the various stakeholders in *Hadhdhunmathi* atoll (the geographic boundary of LECReD); in order to address this the project has an established PCU in *Hadhdhunmathi* atoll tasked with community engagement. In addition, they had also conducted a climate change forum with a dedicated stall to provide information on its proposed small grants facility. An additional dedicated outreach workshop for councils was recommended to supplement existing plans for information dissemination. School and academic engagement was particularly stressed upon during the discussion.

It was decided to ensure that both the areas of thematic coverage and concerned proposals would be streamlined to address the needs of the community through collaborate efforts between various stakeholders within the community and this should be reflected well in the PCM. The NCB further recommended that LECReD small grants should have clear objectives on why the small grants are being given and clear identification of expected results. The LECReD.

## 2. Results Towards Outcomes

### I. MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS (Outcomes, progress towards Outcomes, or Impacts), in terms of the MFF programme objectives:

- **Outcome Objective 1: Knowledge generated, disseminated and applied for sustainable management of coastal ecosystems**

#### Resilience Analysis Protocol (RAP) document

Through focus group discussions and stakeholder meetings the participants of the workshop gained knowledge on sustainable development planning and forming issue based strategies to address environment issues and challenges

#### Project Cycle management course

Participants gained knowledge and developed proposal for MFF small grants. And through the partnership with TAP grants, it created a platform for the participants to share experience and lesson learnt.

#### “Biodiversity Assessment & Ecological Valuation of *Huraa* Mangrove” project

Identification of key and an inventory for vegetation and mangrove crabs in Huraa Mangrove was established through 1<sup>st</sup> phase the project. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase, ecological roles of the species present in the mangroves were noted as well as identification of major threats to *Huraa* mangroves. The project also incorporated the ecological valuation of *Huraa* Mangrove with explanation of various economic and ecological valuation methods adopted for the research. In addition, university students’ practical involvement in project activities had increased their knowledge and awareness on mangrove resources.

#### MFF-LECRoD Resilience Analysis Protocol (RAP) assessment

Through focus group discussions and stakeholder meetings the participants of the workshop gained knowledge on sustainable development planning and forming issue based strategies to address environment issues and challenges. Through the validation workshop and stakeholder meetings, the participants gained knowledge on develop strategies to tackle environmental issues faced by their community.



### MFF-LECREd Project Cycle Management (PCM) course

Participants gained knowledge and developed proposals for the MFF small grants. The workshop also created a platform for the islanders to share similar issue and ideas, then to plan for better constructive solutions through project planning. This would also increase their capacity to develop problem solving through project activities and visioning.

### Waste Management Training workshop

The workshop improved participant's awareness and knowledge on good practices of waste management by improving their theoretical and practical knowledge. Also provided the opportunity for the participants to share knowledge and experiences. For the workshop, various waste management, recycling and composting champions throughout Maldives and international experts were brought to share their experiences. As a result, it widened the opportunities for further knowledge.

- **Outcome Objective 2: Key stakeholders empowered to engage in decision-making in support of sustainable management of coastal ecosystems**

### Resilience Analysis Protocol (RAP) document

The participants gained knowledge on how to engage in community based collective decision making towards achieving sustainable management of coastal ecosystem. Through the process the participants also understood the importance of representing all the stakeholder groups and specially disadvantage group such as women.

### Ukulhas Medium Grant: Inception Meeting

The inception workshop created a platform for all the project stakeholders to discuss project activities in detail. Helped the stakeholders to get better understanding of project activities and what is required from them. And increased project stakeholder awareness on project formulation and result-based reporting. Furthermore, presented with the opportunity to discuss as a group, and then to come up with a realistic timelines achievable targets.

### SGF project scoping: project scoping for the selected 3 SGP projects, and meetings with the stakeholder and due diligence check

For each of the project a scoping mission was conducted with representatives from major stakeholders of the project. The scoping team visited the sites and met with the targeted communities. Community consultations and stakeholder meetings gave the opportunity for the community to be inclusive in decision-making. As a result, the team was guaranteed that the community needs are being address on the particular project. Also assurance the project activities will contribute towards community resilience and sustainable management of



coastal resources. Furthermore, the team gained more confidence in the proponent of their capacity to implement the project successfully.

### MFF-LECREd Resilience Analysis Protocol (RAP) assessment

The activity provided the platform for LECReD and the LAAMU community to understand concerns of various stakeholder groups and specially disadvantage group such as women. Increased participant knowledge on how to engage in community based collective decision making towards achieving sustainable management of coastal ecosystem was noted.

- **Outcome Objective 3: Coastal governance enhanced to promote integrated and inclusive management**

### Resilience Analysis Protocol (RAP) document

Stakeholder meetings on the process created a platform for the stakeholders to share knowledge and experience, opportunities to understand issues and plans from different prospects such as private sector and grassroots community members.

### Mapping and Enhancing Natural Resource Governance in Small Island Communities

As a result, community and stakeholder awareness increased on natural resource governance and management. Clear guiding documents were prepared for the communities and relevant stakeholders. There was also the possibility for upscaling of the project with minimum effort by replication the process and using of training materials. Replication would require minimum effort because the process has been developed and successfully implemented and the training materials was developed targeting the local communities.

### MFF-LECREd Resilience Analysis Protocol (RAP) assessment

Validation and stakeholder meetings helped for the stakeholders to share knowledge and experience, opportunities to understand issues and plans from different prospects such as private sector engagement and how to incorporate grassroots community members concerns in coastal governance and inclusive management.