

EC Supported Project on “*Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Development for the Long-term Management and Conservation of MCPAs encompassing Coral Reef Resources in South Asia*”

BACKGROUND :

OBJECTIVE:

Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Development for the Long-term Management and Conservation of MCPAs encompassing coral reef resources in South Asia

The European Commission (EC) Proposal titled “***Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Development for the Long-term Management and Conservation of MCPAs encompassing Coral Reef Resources in South Asia***” that had been prepared in cooperation with UNEP-Coral Reef Unit and ICRAN has been approved by the European Commission and signed on 26th December 2005. The project has been launched on 1st January 2006. The Total EC will provide Euros 748,720 over a three year period and 20% of this amount is expected as co-finance from the participating countries and other sources.

COMPLETED ACTIVITIES :

FIRST REGIONAL RESOURCE COORDINATION AND MOBILISATION WORKSHOP FOR THE LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION OF MCPAS IN SOUTH ASIA, COLOMBO, SRI LANKA, 27-28th SEPTEMBER 2006

First Regional Resource Co-ordination and Mobilisation workshop for the Long-term Management and Conservation of MCPAs in South Asia was held in Colombo on 27 and 28 September 2006.

The first workshop sought to finalise the focus of site based project activities,

and gather critical information in support of future project activities. The following objectives were discussed:

- Identification of 5 sites for the implementation of project activities
- Discussion and review of communication between marine and coastal stakeholders within the region and identification of options and priorities for a unifying communication strategy
- Identification of database needs and scenario development
- Identification of possibilities for an electronic discussion forum
- Elaboration of a draft Terms of Reference for the establishment and mode of operation of a regional Task Force
- Identification of appropriate members and affiliations of the regional Task Force
- Selection of an appropriate date for a second regional workshop to finalise draft outputs resulting from this workshop

2ND REGIONAL COORDINATION WORKSHOP FOR THE LONG TERM MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION OF MCPAS IN SOUTH ASIA AND LAUNCH OF SOUTH ASIA CORAL REEF TASK FORCE (SACRTF) COLOMBO, SRI LANKA, 25th - 27th July 2007

The Second Regional Resource Coordination and Mobilisation workshop for the Long-term Management and Conservation of MCPAs in South Asia was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 25-27 July 2007.

WORKSHOPS ON THE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD ENHANCEMENT COMPONENT :

Two workshops on the livelihood component of the project have been held with the help of IMM and IUCN. The first workshop held in India was attended by 17 practitioners from 16 organisations involved in Coastal Livelihood work in 5 countries across South Asia as well as Indonesia and representatives from IMM and IUCN. The Second Workshop was held from 4-10th June 2007, at Negombo, Sri Lanka. This was attended by 11 participants from the region along with IMM and IUCN.

LAUNCH OF SOUTH ASIA CORAL REEF TASK FORCE (SACRTF)

The 10-GC SACEP endorsed the establishment of South Asia Coral Reef Task Force. SACEP with help from ICRAN then made the proposed structure and ToR for the Task Force members and circulated it to a group of experts and country governments for review and suggestions. The suggestions received have been compiled and will be put before the Second Regional Workshop that was held from 25 – 27 July 2007. The workshop officially endorsed and launched the South Asian Coral Reef Task Force (SACRTF).

The launch ceremony of the SACRTF was inaugurated by the Chief Guest, HE Mr. Ahmad Abdullah, Chairman, South Asia Seas and Minister for Environment, Energy and Water, Republic of Maldives and the Guest of Honour, Justice C.G. Weeramantry, former Vice President, International Court of Justice by lighting the oil-lamp on 27th July, 2007 Colombo, Sri Lanka. . The SACRTF is the first Coral reef Task Force to be established in

Asia and only the third in the world for conservation & Development of Coral Reefs.

PRESS CONFERENCE:

A press conference was held to celebrate the launch of the SACRTF to which many national media reporters (press and television) were invited and attended. Printed materials were distributed to the press to raise awareness of the South Asia MCPA project, and the SACRTF launched under the project. The project management team were on hand to field questions from the audience. Dr. Boaz reiterated the significance of the initiative for the region, also highlighting the role of SACEP as a coordinating body for environmental efforts in the region. Dr. Kristian Teleki, and Ms. Nicola Barnard provided the background and rationale behind the South Asia MCPA project, and its significance to the region as a milestone project, and presented information on the importance of the South Asia Coral Reef Task Force in enhancing cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders in the region, and as a mechanism to drive regional coral reef conservation efforts.

**FIRST MEETING SOUTH ASIA CORAL REEF TASK FORCE (SACRTF) 21
DECEMBER 2007, COLOMBO, SRI LANKA.**

The establishment of the South Asia Coral Reef Task Force (SACRTF) to facilitate the implementation of regional and international initiatives in the management of coral reefs and associated ecosystems, and to promote collaborative action, and transboundary responses to shared environmental challenges, was by endorsed by the country governments of the 5 maritime nations of South Asia, at the SACEP Governing Council Meeting in Nepal, in January 2007.

Through extensive consultation with key regional stakeholders, the role, mandate and structure of the SACRTF was developed, and the resulting constitution document endorsed by the participants of the second regional resource coordination workshop held on the 25-27th July 2007, in Colombo, Sri Lanka. SACRTF representatives have been selected in accordance with the constitution document and regional nominations.

This working meeting was the first official meeting of the SACRTF representatives and was held on 21st December 2007 in Colombo. The Chief Guest on this occasion was Hon. Mr. Ahmed Abdullah, Minister of Environment Minister of Environment, Energy and Water,

Republic of Maldives and Hon. Mr. Patali Champika Ranawaka, Minister of Environment & Natural Resources, Government of Sri Lanka was the Guest of Honour. The meeting was

attended by the national members of the South Asia Coral Reef Task Force from Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The International Community represented by IMM and IUCN.

Efforts were also made to get experts from the Coral Reef Crime Scene Investigation (CAFTA) Project in USA and Mexico to initiate action in South Asia for Coral reef enforcement and investigation issues and build the capacity

of local resource Managers. A Representative from the Task Force was also present at this meeting to make the delegates aware of the actions taken by the African Task Force for its establishment and smooth functioning.

Future Activities :

The following activities are planned in the balance period of the project :

- a) Development and production of an interactive regional communication strategy
- b) Development and production of training curricula for optimised MCPA management
- c) Implementation of training for staff at MCPA sites
- d) Implementation of maritime law enforcement training with staff from existing MCPAs
- e) Implementation of environmental education programs with coastal communities in the vicinity of existing MCPA sites*
- f) Development of South Asia Coastal Resource Task Force (SACRTF)*
- g) Development of accessible centralised information conduit and resource base*
- h) Development of interactive coral reef stakeholder network*
- i) Strengthened capacity of policy makers, planners and managers to design and implement livelihood enhancement and diversification for poor reef users*
- j) Long-term coral reef management in South Asia*
(A detailed SACRTF Implementation Plan is Attached as Annex 1)

A logo competition is being held among the regional stakeholders and entries will be reviewed and the best logo will be selected as the official logo for the SACRTF.

Annex 1 : SACRTF Implementation Plan

SACRTF Activities	2008											Partners	Comments	
	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec				
Coordination														
National Coral Reef Focal Points Appointed in each country													SACEP, Country Governments	Institutions designated as focal points for coral reefs to increase coordination potential
Build SACRTF Network - Formal introductions of members to focal points													SACEP	Develop a short-list of focal point contacts within international and regional bodies of relevance. Contacts made available on the SACEP, ICRAN and project websites
Examine national capacity needs, evaluate and review existing mechanisms for coral reef management													SACRTF, SACEP to lead	Produce a summary brief with a view to using this information to develop a comprehensive regional action strategy development
Prepare a regional coral reef action strategy													SACRTF - lead by SACEP	Strategy will incorporate key findings on the development and implementation of a networked system of MCPAs and identify supporting frameworks for effective implementation
Selection of Environmental Education Proposals for implementation at 5 project sites													SACRTF, SACEP, with support from ICRAN	Contracts to be developed between SACEP and successful recipients and SACEP to expedite funds to site level. UNEP to facilitate fund to SACEP.
Meetings - Different SACRTF Members will participate in the following meetings to raise the profile of the SACRTF and coral reefs														
Regional Training – Toolkit for MPA Managers in South Asia													SACEP	Trainers to be develop by the SACRTF in coordination with SACEP and local experts.
Sustainable Livelihoods Enhancement and Diversification Policy Forum (linked to May SACRTF Meeting)													IMM, IUCN-ELG	SACRTF Representatives to attend, and facilitate the attendance of target constituents (where appropriate e.g. visa etc)
COP 9 - Bonn, Germany													SACEP/SACRTF	SACRTF Representative to attend and present information on the objectives and activities of the SACRTF
SACRTF Members Meeting													SACEP, SACRTF	Quorum of SACRTF Representatives to attend to review progress of the work plan and sustainable financing strategy
ICRI General Meeting - Florida, USA													SACEP/SACRTF	Presentation on SACRTF activities and progress since January
East Africa Coral Reef Task Force Meeting (date tbc)													SACEP/SACRTF	Share experiences with EACRTF, and learn about the regional action strategy being released in WIO

Fundraising												
Preparation of a challenge grant for launch at the SACEP GC											SACEP, SACRTF Chair, ICRAN	Sustainable financing is critical for the continued operation of the SACRTF beyond 2008. The challenge grant will request and match financial commitments from all participating countries.
Preparation of key materials (e.g. annual budget projection for the maintenance of the SACRTF) for country governments											SACEP, SACRTF Chair, ICRAN	
Policy												
Review existing policy, and gaps in coral reef management and preparatory materials generated for SACEP GC											SACRTF	
SACEP Governing Council Meeting -			20-22								SACEP, SACRTF, ICRAN	Presentation on session on the SACRTF done and challenge grant launched. Members of GC, SACP, updated on progress of SACRTF.
Position Papers generated building on recommendations from SACEP GC											SACEP, SACRTF, IMM, IUCN	Statement on the importance of coral reefs and need for improved management Statement on coral reefs and livelihoods generated and disseminated
Raise the profile of coral reefs among country governments and lobby for enhanced support for their effective management											SACRTF, SACEP, National Coral Reef Focal Points	Dissemination of SACRTF briefs and position statements generated.
Communication												
Participants for MCPA Managers Exchange Programme Selected											SACRTF Members & SACEP	
Knowledge Exchange - create opportunities for knowledge exchange between MCPA managers/practitioners through site exposure visits (US\$8,000)											SACRTF, lead by India	Increase awareness of environmental conservation and management issues among decision makers and practitioners through lobbying and exposure visits at 5 project sites
Raising Awareness - Generation of awareness raising materials for dissemination to the general public											SACRTF, with support from ICRAN	All outputs and materials from the SACRTF will be disseminated through member networks and the ICRAN network
Lead a regional response to mass environmental awareness raising campaigns (Earth Day, IYOR, World Environment Day (WED))			Earth Day		WED						SACRTF	SACRTF to support and showcase the regional activities underway through these campaigns

Establish a SACRTF Profile on the IYOR website to showcase the efforts of the region											SACRTF Member Secretary	www.iyor.org
Develop an action plan for engaging with education and community outreach efforts to raise the profile of coral reefs											National Coral Reef Focal Points, SACRTF	
Research & Monitoring												
Identify the strengths of each participating country related to research and monitoring. Prepare a summary for dissemination											SACRTF	Summary report to be showcased on SACEP, ICRAN and project websites
Develop and promote a mechanism to ensure knowledge and training is shared and exchanged											SACRTF	SACRTF actions must build on the past efforts and experiences within the region
Develop linkages with national, regional and international research agencies and monitoring programmes											SACRTF	showcase recent reports related to the SA region on the SACEP, ICRAN and project websites
SACRTF Administration												
Standardised Reporting Format developed											SACRTF Member Secretary, with support from ICRAN	Format to include performance indicators to demonstrate the impact and success of the SACRTF
Progress Reports Submitted to SACRTF Members and ICU											SACRTF Member Secretary	Copy of report to be shared with ICRAN and other project partners
Finalise MCPA Representatives to participate on the SACRTF											SACEP with country government support	MCPA Representatives shall be requested to attend the 2nd SACRTF Meeting
Finalise the logo and branding of the SACRTF to use in future publications											SACRTF	Standardised presentations for SACRTF members, and logos of all sponsors and contributors referenced on materials
Project Coordination											SACEP	Staff and liaison with stakeholders with office supplies and SACEP Staff local travel