



Mangroves for the Future
INVESTING IN COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS



Ranong, Thailand © MFF Secretariat

A vision for a healthier, more prosperous and secure future for all Indian Ocean coastal communities

Investing in coastal ecosystems



Meeru Panorama, Maldives © Nathan Williams

The Greater Indian Ocean Region has a total coastline over 140,000 km long and an ocean of nearly 4 million km². The region's vast network of estuaries, lagoons, mangroves, coral reefs, sandy beaches, seagrasses and wetlands encompasses some of the world's most extensive and diverse tropical coastal ecosystems. These provide essential habitats for many rare and valuable species, which underpin substantial commerce benefiting local, national, regional, and global economies, as well as supporting the livelihoods of millions of poor people. Thus, the humanitarian implications of failure to protect coastal ecosystems are extremely serious.

Known as MFF, Mangroves for the Future was launched by Bill Clinton in Phuket in December 2006. MFF is a unique partnership-led initiative to promote investment in coastal ecosystems. The initiative is founded on a vision for a *healthier, more prosperous and secure future for all Indian Ocean coastal communities*.

Coastal ecosystems represent a valuable stock of natural capital. Degrading these ecosystems puts a serious strain on the socio-economic well-being of society, and leaves it vulnerable to extreme events – as was all too apparent in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. In order to ensure ecosystem productivity and continued support to human development, coastal ecosystems must be maintained and improved.

A new approach

MFF recognises coastal ecosystems as rich assets vital for human society that

must be restored, protected and invested in. The initiative adopts a new approach that re-orientes the limited focus on coastal investment.

This approach means moving from a reactive response to disasters, to progressive activities that address long-term sustainable management needs. These include building awareness and capacity for improved food and livelihood security, disaster preparedness, and climate change adaptation. This new approach also means supporting economic development by promoting sustainable investment opportunities and ensuring coastal ecosystem goods and services are properly valued and protected.

MFF promotes regional collaboration and joint action that strengthen capacity among coastal managers and communities to maximize positive socio-economic and ecological change.

How does MFF work?

MFF has two main objectives: to strengthen the environmental sustainability of coastal development; and to promote the investment of funds and efforts in coastal ecosystem management.

Actions to support MFF's two objectives are designed to make more knowledge available, empower institutions and people to use that knowledge, and thereby enable them to participate more effectively in decision-making and promote good governance in coastal areas.

MFF works at two main levels of influence. The first level works to strengthen the broader frameworks that influence

people's investment decisions and actions, and which enable or hinder environmentally sustainable coastal development. The second level involves direct actions at field level required to manage coastal ecosystems sustainably, equitably and effectively. Together, these two levels of influence tackle both the direct and the underlying causes of ecosystem degradation, unsustainable livelihoods and persistent vulnerability in coastal areas of the Indian Ocean Region.

This approach is designed to deliver on MFF's vision for a *healthier, more prosperous and secure future for all Indian Ocean coastal communities.*



Bill Clinton, Phuket, Thailand

"...Build back better.."

Bill Clinton, June, 2005

The December 2004 tsunami devastation emphasized the strong link between natural coastal ecosystems and human livelihoods. Despite the extraordinary global effort, concerns remained about long-term coastal ecosystem management in the region.

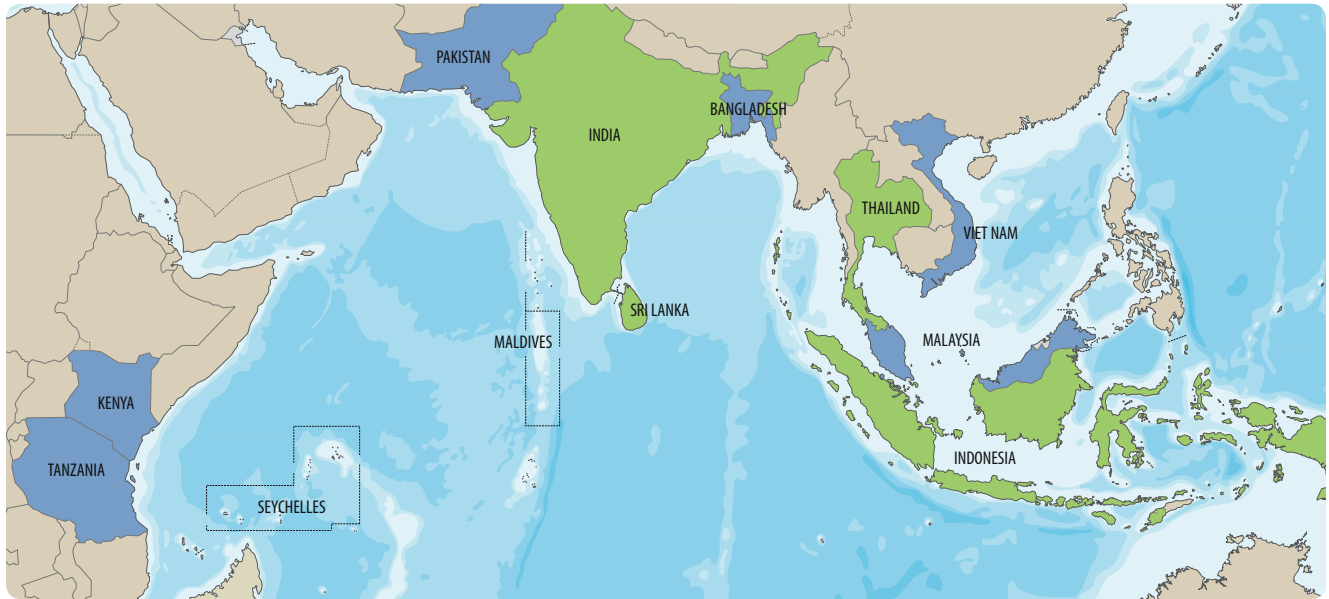
In response, MFF was initiated by IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It has grown to include other UN agencies such as the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), as well as CARE and Wetlands International (WI).

Coastal Ecosystems under Threat

Many marine and coastal ecosystems are under severe threat. High population growth, compounded by migration into coastal areas, has led to increasing demands on coastal resources. The situation is aggravated by uncoordinated economic development and extraction of natural resources. Not all of these pressures are local in origin. Many unsustainable demands on coastal resources arise from global trends and actions, and are driven by markets and forces outside the region. Consumer demand, conflict of interests and weak governance have resulted in a failure to implement or enforce policies at national levels, often with grave consequences for the environment and well-being of communities.

Today more than half of the coral reefs in Southeast Asia are under threat and about 20 percent are already considered damaged beyond recovery. Globally, mangroves provide more than 10 percent of the essential dissolved organic carbon that is supplied to the ocean from land, yet less than one percent of the world's mangroves are protected adequately. In several Asian countries mangrove loss has exceeded 60 percent in recent decades. Seagrasses, which provide indispensable nursery grounds for fish, have also declined alarmingly and even disappeared in some parts of the Indian Ocean. Climate change compounds these impacts and exacerbates other existing environmental problems. Sea level rise, increased storm frequency, and coral bleaching, are already being witnessed across the region as some of the evident effects of climate change. The stakes are extremely high, the issues are complex and implementing management solutions is very challenging.

From strategy to action



MFF Countries

■ Focal Countries

MFF focuses on the countries most affected by the 2004 tsunami: India, Indonesia, Maldives, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

■ Dialogue Countries

MFF engages other countries in the region with an aim to promote an integrated ocean wide approach to coastal zone management. MFF dialogue countries currently are: Bangladesh, Kenya, Malaysia, Pakistan, Tanzania and Viet Nam.

Implementation

At the level of implementation, 15 Programmes of Work (PoWs) have been designed to tackle key aspects of long-term sustainable coastal management. The programmes are implemented through/or in partnership with national governments, UN agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), community organizations, relief and development organizations, as well as the private sector. Implementation is overseen by a Regional Steering Committee (RSC) and National Coordinating Bodies (NCBs) in each country. These structures ensure accountability, transparency and good governance, and offers learning opportunities among diverse, countries, sectors, and agencies.

Regional

At a regional level, implementation of the PoWs is monitored by the MFF RSC

co-chaired by IUCN and UNDP, with national government representatives and institutional partners as its members. RSC meetings are held bi-annually. The MFF Secretariat is working closely with the NCB's, and IUCN and UNDP country offices to ensure smooth running of the initiative and its activities.

National

At the national level, the mandate for directing, regulating, and coordinating development and project activities is steered through NCBs in coordination with existing mechanisms for coastal management. The NCB in each country selects and recommends appropriate projects and programmes eligible for grants. These are submitted as project proposals to an independent Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) for appraisals, thus ensuring transparency in the selection of projects for funding.

MFF is partnership-based, people focused and policy relevant

Implementation Framework

To achieve its goal and objectives, MFF undertakes actions that address four key areas of influence; regional cooperation, national government support, private sector engagement, and community action. Specific actions are identified under 15 PoWs. These are grouped under three cross-cutting themes: building knowledge, strengthening empowerment, and enhancing governance. PoWs will be implemented through a series of projects that are spread geographically across the region based on national and regional priorities.

GOAL

Conserve and restore coastal ecosystems as key assets which support human well-being and security in the Indian Ocean Region

OBJECTIVES

Strengthen the environmental sustainability of coastal development

Promote the investment of funds and effort in coastal ecosystem management

RESULT AREAS

Regional cooperation

National programmes

Private sector engagement

Community action

PROGRAMMES OF WORK

Build Knowledge

1. Improving the knowledge base for coastal planning, policy and management
2. Designing ecologically and socio-economically sound coastal rehabilitation
3. Providing decision support for “reef to ridge” approaches to land and resource management
4. Integrating coastal ecosystem economic values into development planning and appraisal
5. Learning from evaluation of the environmental effects of coastal management initiatives, including the post-tsunami response

Strengthen Empowerment

6. Promoting civil society awareness and participation in coastal decision-making
7. Building the capacity of professional coastal managers for integrated coastal management
8. Supporting environmentally sustainable livelihoods among coastal communities
9. Improving community resilience to natural disasters
10. Identifying sustainable financing mechanisms for coastal ecosystem conservation

Enhance Governance

11. Supporting national integrated coastal management programmes
12. Strengthening the integration and enforcement of environmental and social safeguards in coastal land use planning
13. Building national systems of marine and coastal protected areas that contribute to a regional network
14. Promoting adaptive coastal management programmes that include ongoing ecological and socio-economic assessment and monitoring
15. Encouraging environmentally sustainable business practices in coastal areas

PROJECTS

PROJECTS

Integration of cross-cutting issues

Climate change

Coastal climate change has been adopted as a cross-cutting theme through all the PoWs. Methods for integrating climate change considerations into all MFF activities have been developed based on existing climate change adaptation tools.

Gender

Gender differences can influence attitudes that effect resource use patterns. These considerations are integrated into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of MFF projects, to ensure equitable benefit sharing of coastal resources amongst women and men.

Communications

Communications provides a platform for knowledge-sharing and collaboration between all MFF stakeholders. The communication flow between the regional level and project level is particularly important as it supports the realisation of MFF's objectives, as well as ensuring project results and lessons learned can be collected for wider dissemination.

Capacity development

The MFF Secretariat will continue to build technical capacity through study tours, secondments and by providing regional and international consultants to

complement local expertise. MFF also supports regional and national training courses, such as courses on the use of practical tools and methods applicable to the field/project level, including climate proofing and sustainable livelihood approaches.

Private sector

MFF aims to encourage environmentally sustainable business practices in coastal areas by: building on existing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives; promoting sustainable business opportunities and practices, and developing novel "environmental markets".



Reefscape © J. Tamelander/IUCN

Investing in coastal ecosystems to support sustainable development requires a long-term perspective and local, national, regional and global commitment across all sectors

Sound ecological and socio-economic coastal ecosystem rehabilitation and conservation in tsunami-affected countries of the Indian Ocean

The reef to ridge approach (PoW 3) is being applied to integrated community based watershed and coastal ecosystems management in the provinces of Ranong and Phang Nga in Thailand and in Puttalam Lagoon in northwest Sri Lanka, under the German Federal Government (BMZ) funded project 'Ecologically and socio-economically sound coastal ecosystem rehabilitation and conservation in tsunami-affected countries of the Indian Ocean'.

Complementing the gradual decentralization and devolution of decision-making powers to the provincial and local governments, this project successfully demonstrates a number of simple but powerful tools that are fundamental in shaping the future of ecosystems conservation, not only for Sri Lanka and Thailand, but globally.

Integrated ecosystems management tools include: integrated assessments, including gathering and collating information of biophysical and socio-economic importance; combining scientific and local knowledge; recognizing and enhancing community conservation management and monitoring capabilities. This project demonstrates what can be achieved through human networking, bringing together a breadth and diversity of skills, experience and knowledge from a wide range of people, including scientists, community leaders, local government and youths in support of a common long-term goal.

Projects for people



Nypa wetlands, Viet Nam © D. Macintosh



Net-making, India © IUCN



A Lionfish, Red Sea © Christian Laufenberg, IUCN

Project

The MFF initiative is implemented through a series of on-the-ground projects which will deliver the actions, outputs and associated results based on the PoWs. At project level, activities are implemented through a decentralized structure comprising NGOs, community-based organizations and the private sector. These organizations play a vital role in helping to address the gaps in capacity, coordination and participation which currently exist in the public sector. There are two categories of project funding, a Small Grant Facility (SGF) and MFF large projects. All projects must be aligned with the priorities of the National Strategy and Action Plan (NSAP) of each country.

Small Grant Facilities

Each focal country received an initial allocation of USD 100,000 for SGF projects. The SGF projects are divided into two categories: i) less than USD 10,000, ii) between USD 10,000 - 25,000. SGF guidelines developed by the MFF Secretariat have been tai-

lored by each country to better suit local conditions and needs. SGF projects are managed on behalf of the NCB by an IUCN or UNDP country office in each focal country.

Large projects

Large projects have a budget from USD 50,000 to a maximum of USD 300,000 per project. Each NCB can announce a call for proposals, or invite eligible institutions to apply. To ensure transparency, the large projects are also screened by a TAP. Large projects that are implemented by 2-6 focal countries are encouraged to promote a regional approach to coastal ecosystem management.

Finance

The MFF initiative has been funded from 2007 to 2009 by the governments of Australia, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and UNDP and UNEP. It is foreseen that by having illustrated the high economic and social returns from investing in coastal ecosystems, the scope of the initiative

will continue to grow, especially through public and private sector partnerships to increase investment in coastal ecosystems, conservation and sustainable development. MFF will continue to seek co-financing opportunities that build on projects already initiated, or planned, to maximise outcomes.

Contact us

To find out more about MFF, or to learn how you, your organization, project or community can participate, please contact us.

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www.mangrovesforthefuture.org



MFF builds on a history of coastal management interventions before and after the 2004 tsunami. It focuses on the countries most-affected by the tsunami; **India, Indonesia, Maldives, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and Thailand**. MFF also includes other countries of the Region that face similar issues, with an overall aim to promote an integrated ocean wide approach to coastal zone management.

Its long-term management strategy is based on identified needs and priorities that emerged from extensive consultations with over 200 individuals and 160 institutions involved in coastal management in the Region.

MFF uses mangroves as a flagship ecosystem in recognition of the important role mangroves played in reducing the damage caused by the tsunami, and the implications on livelihoods because of mangrove forest destruction. But **MFF is inclusive of all coastal ecosystems**, including coral reefs, estuaries, lagoons, sandy beaches, sea grasses and wetlands.

Its vision is a healthier, more prosperous and secure future for all sections of the coastal population in Indian Ocean countries. It is a unique partnership-led initiative working in four key areas of influence: regional cooperation, national programme support, private sector engagement and community action.

The initiative undertakes collective actions to build knowledge, strengthen empowerment, and enhance governance through 15 broad programmes of work to address the current and future threats, and to conserve and restore coastal ecosystems. These are implemented through a series of on-the-ground projects, through small and large grant modalities.

MFF seeks more effective and inclusive institutions, policies and mechanisms for cooperation at national and regional levels by prioritising coastal ecosystem management across national development agendas, policies and budgets.

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