



December, 2009-January, 2010

Welcome to the thirteenth issue of the MFF e-Newsletter!

This e-Newsletter aims to keep MFF National Coordinating Bodies (NCBs), partner organisations and other stakeholder groups up to date on MFF activities and other marine and coastal news. We warmly welcome your contribution!

News/Announcements

Pakistan and Viet Nam Join Mangroves for the Future (MFF) as full member countries



Mangroves for the Future
INVESTING IN COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS



A formal decision was taken at the Sixth MFF Regional Steering Committee (RSC-6) meeting to further expand the MFF initiative to include two former dialogue countries, Pakistan and Viet Nam, as full members. RSC-6 was held at the Sirindhorn International Environmental Park, in Cha'am, Thailand between January 25-28, 2010. The MFF co-branding bar has been revised (*left*), now with eight countries.

Pakistan was represented by the Secretary Ministry of Environment, Mr. Kamran Lashari, and Viet Nam by Professor Nguyen Chu Hoi from the Viet Nam Administration for Seas and Islands (VASI) within the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. Pakistan and Viet Nam which have been dialogue countries since 2008, became full members after fulfilling the criteria of establishing a National Coordinating Body and preparing a National Strategy and Action Plan.

New MFF Indonesia Coordinator!

Ms. Fini Lovita is the new MFF Indonesia Coordinator as of January, 2010. Her educational background is in economic management with marine and coastal environmental management working experiences. She has 10 years of experiences including working with WWF Indonesia for almost 6 years as a sustainable fisheries officer and almost 4 years working as an independent consultant on marine and coastal management issues. She is also a registered ReefCheck Indonesia Foundation Experts Panel member. Fini sees this position as a great opportunity and is very keen to learn, especially from the other MFF member countries. She is also determined to make MFF Indonesia a success! Contact her at: fini.lovita@gmail.com.



Recent Events



MFF Sixth Regional Steering Committee Meeting

MFF held its sixth regional steering committee meeting (RSC-6) 25-28 January in Cha'am, Thailand. The Regional Steering Committee is comprised of institutional partners and focal country representatives as well as the MFF Regional Secretariat, observers and specially invited guests. The Committee meets twice a year to take strategic decisions. The RSC-6 meeting was opened by the MFF Co-chairs: Ms. Aban Marker Kabraji, IUCN Asia Regional Director and Mr. Nicholas Rosellini, Deputy Regional Director, UNDP Regional

Centre in Bangkok. The welcome address was made by Professor Seree Supratid, Managing Director of the Sirindhorn International Environmental Park (SIEP) where the meeting was held.



Mr. Johan Ernst Nilsson at RSC-6 © S. Sriaram, MFF Thailand

Specially invited guests
Johan Ernst Nilsson a famous Swedish explorer who has undertaken explorations in more than 100 countries paid a visit during the MFF RSC-6 to talk about how he raises awareness about climate change and how he is keen to promote initiatives such as MFF. Johan's next exploration will be going from 'Pole 2 Pole' using only nature's own power.

Thanpuying Dr. Suthawan Sathirathai, President of GSEI (Good Governance for Social Development and the Environment Institute),

Dr Sonjai Havanond Deputy Managing Director and Kings Project Manager, and **Professor Sanit Aksornkoe**, President, Thailand Environment Institute also spoke at this very important meeting in their capacity as advisors to MFF Thailand.



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MFF Advisors, from left to right: **Dr. Havanond, Thanpuying Dr. Sathirathai and Prof. Aksornkoe**

The Future of MFF

Dr. Kenneth MacKay, who was a member of the Sida commissioned MFF External review team, presented the review findings to the steering committee members. The recommendations were very well received and many had already been incorporated into the draft proposal for MFF phase 2, which was then presented by the Secretariat. All the countries and institutional partners were given the opportunity to comment on the proposal. A full day was then allocated to small working group sessions to consider some of the thematic priority areas for phase 2. Other working groups were dedicated to regional and national aspects of the proposal, and to finalization of national workplans for implementation. The working groups then presented their initial conclusions and recommendations in plenary as well as contributing valuable written material to help the Secretariat prepare the final version of the proposal.

Method for Assessing Vulnerability and Adaptation of Mangroves

One important decision made at RSC-6 was that the RSC meetings will gradually evolve to include knowledge sharing and networking, in conjunction with their normal decision-making functions. As a first step in this direction, **Dr. Joanna Ellison**, School of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania, Australia attended the RSC-6 meeting to give a presentation on how climate change impacts such as sea level rise will affect mangrove habitats and related livelihoods. She presented a Generalizable Method for Assessing Vulnerability and Adaptation of Mangroves and piloting management response/adaptations. Joanna gave examples from a WWF Project in Cameroon, Fiji and Tanzania. The outcomes of this project were mangrove vulnerability assessments and the development of climate change adaptation measures that enhance the resource base for local communities and decrease the barriers to vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning globally. The project has further established and strengthened knowledge-sharing opportunities and climate change adaptation-related activities at multiple levels.



© Ellison, J, WWF



© Sriaram, S. MFF Thailand

The Sirindhorn International Environmental Park

The RSC-6 participants got a chance to visit some of the the Park’s habitat restoration areas and exhibitions. SIEP was inaugurated in 2003 to commemorate the 48th birthday of her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn and her insight into mangrove rehabilitation and restoration. SIEP develops training and demonstration modules to make innovative research publicly available and facilitates transfer of technical and indigenous practical know-how in cooperation with networks within and outside the country. Since 1994 it has been operating as an information and research center, acknowledge by the United Nations University as regional center for learning. The primary focus of the learning center is energy conservation, natural resource management and environmental awareness to promote sustainable development practices and processes.



Google Earth Workshop 29 January, 2010, Bangkok

Mr. Markus Nater, IUCN Thailand Programme conducted a Google Earth training workshop for MFF Country Coordinators and Communications Focal points to introduce new tools and ways to share MFF project information spatially. For more information and for an on-line tutorial please visit: www.gvision.info.

Communications & Learning Workshop, 30-31 January, 2010, Bangkok, Thailand

MFF currently has a portfolio of 84 projects. Half of these SGF projects have already been completed with excellent results. Janaka De Silva and Minna Epps, MFF Secretariat therefore hosted the first Communications and Learning Workshop for Country coordinators. The aim of the workshop was to build communications capacity to develop national communications strategies and action plans to package and effectively communicate MFF project results and other activities; and to map skills and capacities in country and to develop a system for collecting information and manage knowledge as well as a framework for learning. For the latter, MFF Secretariat also invited Ms. Sriyanie Miththapala with extensive experience in turning project information into knowledge from coastal and community projects in the region. She has been working as a consultant for the “BMZ” project under the auspices of MFF. Both BMZ and MFF share a vision of healthy coastal ecosystems and secure livelihoods for coastal communities.



Private Sector Engagement



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Private sector consultation workshop

MFF is increasing its efforts to engage with businesses at regional and national level and has already developed partnerships with Tata Chemicals, Chevron, and hotel, resort and spas such as Six Senses and the Taj Group of hotels. MFF has identified several priority sectors, namely; **Fisheries, Tourism, Oil & Gas, Ports & Harbours and Mining** as well as other important sectors. In conjunction with RSC 6, IUCN Asia’s Business and Biodiversity Programme and the MFF Regional Secretariat together organized a half day workshop with selected MFF private sector partners. The aim of the workshop was to discuss MFF’s priorities involving the private sector during phase 2 and to share experiences

amongst interested partners on private sector led sustainable coastal ecosystem investments and sustainable business practices. The Six Senses Learning Center and the Indochine Group based in Singapore explored its opportunities with MFF. Reearth –an innovative international eco-charity group which are organizing an eco-festival with a focus on coastal environmental and social issues to be held in Koh Samui, Thailand 25-26 February 2010 was also presented. The private sector partners present welcomed this first consultative workshop and were eager to explore further opportunities to link with MFF in investing in coastal infrastructure.





Tata Chemicals takes the lead in mangrove conservation in Mithapur, India

The Mithapur coast in the state of Gujarat is well known for its unique marine and coastal resources - rich coral reefs, lush mangrove stands, turtle nesting beaches and bird nesting and roosting areas. At the same time, substantial development activities are endangering this rich biodiversity. One of the major companies active in the area is Tata Chemicals Limited (TCL), mainly involved in large-scale salt winning. TCL, through its Society for Rural Development (TCSRSD) has been working in partnership with MFF, eco-clubs and self help groups to restore denuded mangrove cover in the Charakla Saltworks area in Dwarka Taluka, Jamnagar District. The process is aimed at

initiating community participation in mangrove restoration, capacity building and the creation of awareness on mangrove conservation. The main activities of the project included land development (excavation of channels and gullies to facilitate regular tidal inflow), nursery activities, community participation and capacity building, mangrove re-planting and monitoring and process documentation.

Step up aspirations to save biodiversity as 2010 begins, says IUCN.

The Convention of Biological Diversity's post-2010 targets are likely to aim for a halt in biodiversity loss by 2050 and for more 'modest' interim targets for 2020. A vision should aim both to arrest this loss and restore the populations, habitats and ecological cycles that supports biodiversity and ecosystem

services said **Mr. Ashok Khosla**, IUCN President and **Julia Marton-Lefevre**, IUCN Director General (Nature, vol 463/7, January, 2010). MFF promotes healthy coastal and marine ecosystems

for a more prosperous and secure future and will engage in several efforts to raise awareness about biodiversity and threatened marine fauna and flora.



Upcoming Events



Eco-Social Festival, REEARTH 25-26 February, 2010 Koh Samui, Thailand

Reearth- is an innovative international eco-charity event promoting sustainable coastal tourism through awareness-and fundraising events using concerts to raise awareness and funds for conservation activities. The event has been successfully marketed through hotel/travel and inflight magazines, youtube, Facebook, Twitter and the Reearth website www.reearth.me already visited by 75 countries and is supported by Sida/SENSA. The Reearth group is working

with local conservation and fishers groups. Several coastal and marine interventions such as erosion dams, artificial reefs and mangrove planting are being planned in consultation with the local community and relevant government authority to ensure that all guidelines and protocols are adhered to. During the festival a system of nine check-dams and 50 meters of artificial reef will be created together with musicians, tourists, local conservation groups and community, schools, marine experts, government, officials, sponsors and organizers. MFF will support efforts to raise awareness about the negative effects of unsustainable tourism practices through information tents with materials in English and in Thai. MFF will also further provide technical expertise to ensure sound practices/interventions both (short and longer term).

1st Project Steering Committee Meeting of the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME)

BOBLME will hold its first Project Steering Committee meeting in Dhaka, Bangladesh, 03-04 March 2010. The Project Steering Committee consists of one high ranking official each from the respective Central Government Agency (Ministry or Department) for Fisheries and the Environment of all eight BOBLME partner countries (*Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand*). The Meeting will review the Annual Regional Workplan and provide guidance on other project implementation related matters. It will also decide on the host country for the Regional Coordination Unit. The National Task Forces are multi-sectoral - multi-stakeholder and include NGOs. The Committee has 16 Gov officials one of which is Mr. Mohammad Zuhair, Chair of the MFF Maldives National Coordinating Body and Dr. Cherdchinda Chotiyaputta, Secretary of MFF National Coordinating Body of Thailand.



5th Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts and Islands 3-7, May, 2010, Paris, France

MFF attended the 4th conference which was held in April, 2008 in Hanoi, Viet Nam. The theme of the fifth Conference on Oceans, Coasts and Islands is: *Ensuring Survival, Preserving Life, and Improving Governance*. For more information and to find out how you can participate, please visit: www.globaloceans.org/content/registration. It will also be the 50th Anniversary of UNESCO which has its headquarters in Paris.

World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress (WSFC), October 18-22, 2010 in Bangkok, Thailand

The WSFC is a scientific meeting that aims to address issues concerning small-scale fisheries around the world. Researchers, practitioners, policy makers, fishers, industries and other interested persons are invited to participate at the conference to discuss key issues and offer local and global solutions. Additional information, including detailed conference themes and format, registration and fee, abstract submissions, general program and important dates, is available on SEAFDEC's website: www.seafdec.or.th/wsfc2010.

From the Field

Sri Lanka Focus

Stories from the MFF Small Grant Facility Programme in Sri Lanka, implemented from January to December 2009 in six critical coastal priority areas.



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Managing Mangrove resources for long-term benefits

Coastal communities turn to efficient cooking energy options to reduce their dependency on mangroves for fuel wood

A community operated bio-gas unit, using kitchen and organic waste, supplies gas for cooking to four households in the fringes of Madu Ganga estuary area.

While reducing the use of mangrove fuel wood, the residual slurry is popular among the neighbourhood as a fertilizer for their home gardens. The neighbours in turn give kitchen waste to the unit. The energy efficient cooking stoves reduce fuel wood usage by 40-50%. Over 400 households are now using these stoves for cooking in several villages near the Puttalam lagoon and in the Rekawa-Ussangoda-Kalametiya area.



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[The Vinivida NGO Coalition, Semuthu Fisheries Cooperative Society Ltd, PEARLS in Puttalam and SEEDO in the Rekawa-Ussangoda-Kalametiya area projects]



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Ensuring regular income that supports conservation efforts

Women in fisher families begin Aloe vera (medicinal aloe) cultivation and reed-based handicraft production as alternative income generation activities

15 women from fishing families in Kudawa and Anawasala in Puttalam began *Aloe vera* cultivation in February, 2009. The harvest is sold to a leading cosmetics production company in Sri Lanka. The average monthly income is LKR 2,000 – 5,500. Preliminary surveys show that fishing is now reduced by 5% and monthly income of fisher families increased by 26%. Furthermore, a marketing channel has been established for the women's society. The company no longer buys wild collected *Aloe vera*.

[The Marine and Coastal Resources Conservation Foundation in Puttalam Project]

50 women from fisher families in Danketiya, Palathuduwa and Netolpitiya villages were trained in reed-based handicraft production as an alternative income generation activity. Reeds are collected from the nearby wetland. Each person is now able to make an additional monthly income between LKR 2,000 – 6,000. Their average monthly income has increased by about 60%!

[The Wanasarana Thurulatha Swechcha Society in Rekawa-Ussangoda-Kalametiya area project]



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Sharing Knowledge to reduce threats to coastal ecosystems

School children, youth and elders are actively engaged to monitor threats to their coastal ecosystems

Fifty school children from two schools in Ambalangoda and Balapitiya, and about 100 youth and elderly persons in the Galmanduwa, Pathemulla and Maduwa islands in Balapitiya were made aware of the threats to the Madu Ganga wetland ecosystem – an important RAMSAR site.

A water testing facility was set up in the vicinity so that students in the area are able to test the quality of the water and monitor the health of the wetland environment.

[The Lanka Jathika Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya in the Madu Ganga area project]

Educating resource users and school children and involving them in protecting the Madu Ganga environment by combining 'Knowledge & Action' is one of the many services provided by the Mangrove Education Centre in Pathemulla. About 1,000 people attend these sessions annually. The corrugated sheet shed built in 2006 was replaced with a brick-walled permanent structure to provide a comfortable learning atmosphere for the visitors. [The Nagenahiru Foundation in the Madu Ganga area Project]



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Before



After

About of 100 junior and 75 senior students in two remote schools in Ambalantota learned about mangrove ecosystems through discussions and field excursions.

Knowledge gathered from project activities was shared with other schools and the elders in the area through exhibitions and other events held by the students.

[The Visura Development Foundation in the Rekawa- Ussangoda-Kalametiya area Project]

Growing trees to improve coastal habitats

Coastal communities plant local plant varieties to restore their degraded coastal and riverine areas and protect them from natural hazards

Two 'green belts' each 0.5 km x 4 m in extent, were established in the Hadjar and Ethukaal beaches in Kattankudy. Plant survival is high due to protective covers made of palmyrah leaves and after-care by the communities. [Arifa Enterprises in Batticaloa Project]

Women from fisher families planted a 1,200 square meter area in the South Panama beach with 2,880 seedlings of coastal plant varieties.

5,500 bamboo plantlets propagated in community nurseries were planted in 15 hectares in Rekawa to reduce erosion from river banks and enhance the riverine ecosystem. The bamboo will also be an alternative for wood from mangroves. [The National Ethnic Unity Foundation (NEUF) in Panama Project]



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Providing opportunities for alternative livelihoods

Women in fisher communities and tsunami-affected families supplement their income by engaging in livestock development

In Pottuvil, women from eight fisher families are engaged in running a goat farm. The farm, surrounded by a protective live fence, ensures that no damage is done by the goats to the surrounding environment. The number of goats almost doubled within a period of six months. The women are actively engaged in the new venture; they now receive an average monthly income of LKR 2,000. [Al-Ameen Samurdhi Society in Pottuvil project]



The newly-established poultry farm in Pottuvil is run by almost two dozen widows of tsunami affected families (including those who were also affected by the armed conflict in the Eastern Province). Profit from the initial sale of 500 chickens fetched LKR 40,000, which was equally divided amongst the women. [The Arugam Bay Tourism Association in Arugam Bay, Pottuvil project]



Sixteen widows are engaged in rearing 32 buffaloes at a community farm owned by the Livestock Development Dairy Farmers' Association. Their monthly production of milk averages about 500 litres, which fetches LKR 17,000 - an additional income to the families.

[The Livestock Development Dairy Farmers' Association in Pottuvil Project]



Working together to introduce productive community farming practices

Fisher communities restore an old village tank and transform the tank environment into habitable and productive agricultural land



The Palugaswewa tank in Lunama was rehabilitated with the participation of 22 farmers, increasing the tank capacity from 6 to 14 hectare meters. These farm families are now able to cultivate the surrounding land (Palugaswewa Farm), even during the drought season, and increase their income.

[The Youth Enterprises Information Centre in Rekawa-Ussangoda-Kalametiya area Project]

Fisher families are introduced to agriculture, which is a novel experience for them. Women in the fisher families are trained and assisted in cultivating their homesteads, with vegetables and fruits as well as perennial crops, to secure food and additional income from the sale of surplus produce.



The farmer families have enhanced their knowledge on sustainable agricultural practices. A fence erected around the 9 hectare farm prevents crop damage by wild animals.

[The Youth Enterprises Information Centre in Rekawa-Ussangoda-Kalametiya area Project]



Media

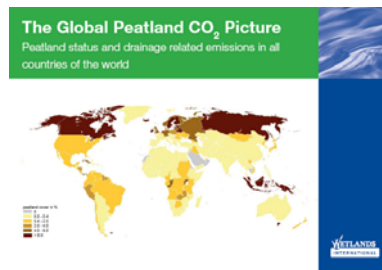
Watch New Shortfilms on the MFF website, including from our partner Wetlands International in Bahasa Indonesia! <http://www.mangrovesforthefuture.org/news-media.html>

Media training



Media training was a key component of the recent communications and learning workshop held in Bangkok. The training included how to craft messages and deliver soundbites as well as getting in front of the camera, not only behind it!

New Popular publication!



[The Global Peatland CO2 Picture](#) **Peatland status and drainage related emissions in all countries of the world**

The report by Wetlands International presents the first overview ever of peatland carbon data for all countries and regions of the world. For every country/area information is given on extent and status of peatlands, volume of the peat resource and on CO2 emissions from different types of land use, both for the year 1990 as well as for the year 2008.

Download: [The Global Peatland CO2 Picture](#)

Put your news in the next issue of the MFF E-Newsletter!

Do you have any news or stories that you would like to feature in the next issue of the bi-monthly MFF Newsletter? We invite you to send in your latest news and updates on projects and other activities to: e-news@mangrovesforthefuture.org.

To subscribe to this E-newsletter please go to: www.mangrovesforthefuture.org to sign up.

About MFF

Mangroves for the Future (MFF), is a unique partner-led initiative to promote investment in coastal ecosystem which builds on a history of coastal management interventions before and after the 2004 tsunami, as well as extensive consultations with over 200 individuals and 160 institutions involved in coastal zone management. It focuses on the following countries; India, Indonesia, Maldives, Pakistan, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam, as well as dialogue countries in the region that face similar issues. MFF uses mangroves as a flagship ecosystem but is inclusive of all coastal ecosystems.

MFF provides a collaborative platform among the many different agencies, sectors and countries who are addressing challenges to coastal ecosystem and livelihood issues. Through generating knowledge, empowering institutions and individuals to promote good governance in coastal ecosystem management MFF seeks to achieve demonstrable results in influencing regional cooperation, national programme support, private sector engagement and community action.

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