Mangroves for the Future (MFF) E-Newsletter Issue No: 17
August – September – October 2010

Welcome to the latest issue of the MFF e-newsletter!

This issue is a special edition covering August – October. The MFF Secretariat will introduce a new format to the e-newsletter in the next edition (November-December).

The MFF 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!

Recent Events

MFF and BOBLME Second Regional Training Course (RTC-2) "Applying Project Cycle Tools to Support Integrated Coastal Management" 4-10 October 2010, Tamil Nadu, India

Training course participants engaged in group work

The second MFF regional training course was a collaboration between the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem project (BOBLME) and Mangroves For the Future (MFF). The training course built on the first Project Cycle Management training course organised by the MFF Secretariat in Indonesia in 2008. It also aimed to build skills and strengthen the capacity of its national coordinators, focal points, project holders and members of the National Coordinating Bodies (NCB), for whom project management is an important responsibility. The course was hosted by the Ministry of Environment and Forests-India (MOEF) and organized by MFF India, together with MS Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) and the MFF Regional Secretariat.

A total of 37 participants from the MFF Focal countries in India, Indonesia, Maldives, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam, plus representatives from three BOBLME supported countries, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Myanmar, were trained on project cycle management tools and methods applicable at the project level. The training course focused on lectures related to the understanding and application of the Logical Framework Approach (LFA), which serves as the integrating tool in designing project proposals, and additional tools and methods on:

- Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA)
- Community participation
- Coastal climate change considerations and disaster risk reduction
- Gender considerations and communication needs.

This was the first training course to include all the MFF cross-cutting themes of gender and project communication considerations, and climate change. It was also the first opportunity to demonstrate the MFF Climate Proof four-step approach.

The course was delivered using interactive learning sessions involving practical demonstrations, plenary and rotating learning sessions, thematic working groups, practical exercises and a field visit to the Pichavaram mangrove wetlands, near the city of Chidabaram.

The visit to the Pichavaram mangrove wetlands served as an excellent learning experience for the participants to interact with the local communities and to develop project proposals as a training exercise. A mangrove wetland is a multiple-use ecosystem that performs a number of protective, productive and economic functions to sustain the ecological and livelihood security of the coastal communities. In the case of the Pichavaram mangrove wetlands, coastal communities, including 180 households that were relocated because of the tsunami in 2004, utilise the fishery and forestry resources of the mangrove wetlands.

Local fishers in the Pichavaram mangrove wetlands

A course participant explains a 30 year timeline of climate-related events, gained through Participatory Rural Appraisal with the local community

During the 2004 tsunami some of these communities were also witness to how mangrove greenbelts provide protection, whereas neighbouring communities that were exposed directly to the tsunami waves were devastated.

The training course culminated with presentations of five project proposals prepared by the course participants to a panel of technical experts from India including the training team; Dr. B.P. Nilaratna and Dr. J.R. Bhatt (MOEF); Dr. A. Parida (MSSRF); and Prof. T. Balasubramanian (Annamalai University).

The five project proposals developed were based on the information gathered during the field visit, using rapid participatory approaches, to engage with community members living around the Pichavaram mangrove wetlands:

1. Mangrove-based ecotourism which aimed to improve the socio-economic and educational benefits from sustainable mangrove eco-tourism;
2. Mangrove fisheries to halt or reduce the decline in fish and shellfish abundance and income for subsistence fishers;
3. "Mangrove-friendly" aquaculture to develop and replicate models of mangrove-friendly aquaculture suitable for local community income-generation;
4. Coastal "Bio-shields" for coastal protection and environmental improvement achieved through mangrove/non-mangrove rehabilitation; and
5. The Post-tsunami response in Pichavaram to achieve community resilience against future disasters and climate change.

The training course facilitated peer-to-peer learning in the preparation of project proposals and in sharing country experiences and practices and was regarded as a great success. At the end of the course, the participants expressed that they would like to see the training course not only extended, in terms of the number of days especially the time spent in the field, but they also conveyed the need for follow-up with training courses tailored to national needs and context. As one senior Indian participant commented, "Attending the training course was one of the best weeks of my life!".

The training team was headed by Prof. Donald Macintosh (MFF Regional Coordinator), Dr. V Selvam (MSSRF Director Coastal Systems Research), Ms Minna Epps (Consultant on Gender and Communications), Dr. P Thamizoli (Social Anthropologist) and Mr. Oliver Abrenilla (UNEP Seconded Consultant on CCA/DRR).

A note of special interest

The Tamil Nadu city of Chidambaram is famous for its magnificent temple, covering an area of 13 hectares, which is dedicated to Nataraja, or Lord Shiva. This temple is one of the most ancient and celebrated shrines in India. It is of great religious, historic and cultural significance, being many centuries old and one of the few temples dedicated to both Shiva and Vishnu.

The original name of Chidambaram was Thillai, named after the mangrove tree thillai (*Excoecaria agallocha*) which was once abundant in this coastal area and is still found today in the Pichavaram mangrove wetlands. Legend has it that Lord Shiva strolled within the thillai forest.

Of great interest to the RTC-2 participants is a sculpture within the temple, the "temple tree" dedicated to *Excoecaria agallocha* and dating back to the second century (see photo). This mangrove species was used widely to treat leprosy. According to mythology, the Indian King Shveta Varman was himself healed of leprosy by bathing in a sacred pond in the thillai forest of Chidambaram. In return he instituted the temple and is credited with initiating the formal worship of Lord Nataraja there.

The healing properties of *Excoecaria* have been scientifically validated, since it has proven anti-microbial properties. To treat leprosy the bark of the tree was soaked in water to create an infusion, or burned to generate smoke.

The RTC-2 participants and trainers were treated to a wonderful tour of the temple expertly guided by Prof. T. Balasubramanian, Director of the Centre of Advanced Study in Marine Biology, Annamalai University.

The mangrove "temple tree"

Mangroves for the Future and UNEP launch Climate Proof: A four-step guide for coastal projects. 21 October 2010, Bangkok, Thailand

Dr. Young-Woo Park, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Regional Director and Representative for Asia and the Pacific, and Prof. Don Macintosh, Mangroves for the Future (MFF) Coordinator, launched the joint MFF-UNEP publication Climate Proof: A four-step guide for coastal projects during the Asia-Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Forum on 21 October 2010 at the United Nations Conference Center in Bangkok, Thailand.

Dr. Young-Woo Park (UNEP) and Prof. Don Macintosh (MFF) at the launch

Around 550 participants from as many as 14 countries across Asia and the Pacific attended and witnessed the launch of the Climate Proof four-step guide and the accompanying reference tool during the UNEP-led Climate Change Forum.

Dr. Park welcomed the publication of the Climate Proof guide, and recognised its importance in helping coastal project managers to address the potential impacts of climate change. Dr Park also highlighted the guide's timeliness for mainstreaming climate change adaptation strategies into ongoing coastal projects.

Attendees at the Climate Change Forum at UNEP, Thailand

Prof. Don Macintosh affirmed Dr. Park's statement by emphasising how the Climate Proof guide illustrates MFF's dedicated approach to knowledge-building, which is one of MFF's strategies to enhance the resilience and adaptive capacity of its projects.

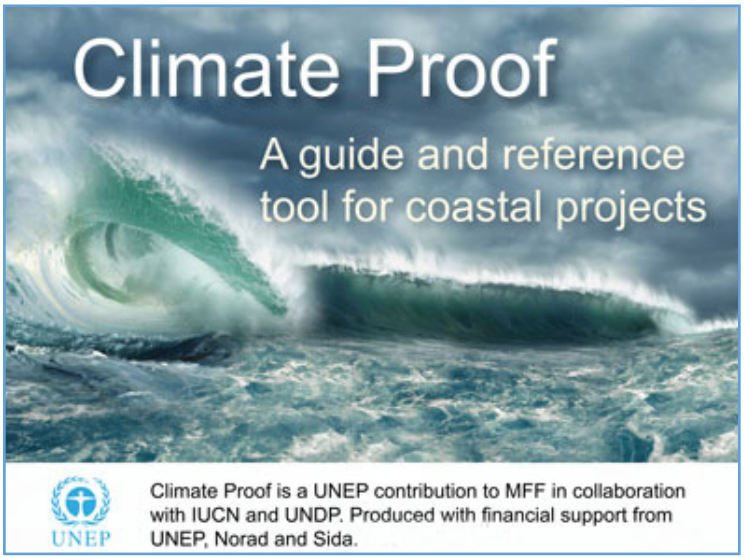
The four-step Climate Proof guide outlines a "four-stepped" approach to help coastal managers consider the potential impacts of climate change on their projects. The approach is an integral part of the MFF Large Project proposal guidelines and is closely linked to the overall project design approach, which uses the Logical Framework Analysis (LFA).

The four steps outlined in the guide specifically advises coastal managers for each project to:

1) set the context
2) identify the impacts
3) select the adaptation options (responses) to manage the identified impacts; and
4) determine project resources (inputs) required to implement the identified adaptation option.

An accompanying Climate Proof reference tool illustrates the four steps in the context of MFF projects and the MFF Programmes of Work; it also provides additional background reading and links to online resources.

Dr Park (UNEP) launches Climate Proof



The Climate Proof guide aims to help coastal project managers understand climate drivers that cause physical changes in coastal zones, as well as identify potential impacts of climate change on project objectives. The guide also assists project managers in identifying appropriate adaptation actions as well as resource requirements to implement these actions. Climate Proof is a tool designed to ensure the long-term sustainability of coastal management interventions.

The Climate Proof guide and reference tool are now available from the MFF webpage; to download your copy visit: www.mangrovesforthefuture.org

View the photo album of the MFF Thailand representation at the Climate Change Adaptation Forum 2010

Wetlands International WI-MFF Project's photo album: Training on mangrove survey and monitoring, August 2010

Training participants at a field site.
Photo courtesy of Wetlands International 2010

Wetlands International-Thailand Office, in collaboration with the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Surat Thani provincial Fisheries office, the Office of Mangrove Resource Development Station 12 and 14 and the Ban Don Bay Conservation Network (BBCN), is implementing a project called "Reversing Environmental Damage through Community Focused Sustainable Livelihoods in Ban Don, Surat Thani Province". This project is being implemented with financial support from the Mangrove for the Future (MFF).

View the photo album of the project training on mangrove survey and monitoring

Read more about the WI-MFF project

Upcoming events

Seventh Meeting of the MFF Regional Steering Committee (RSC-7), 1-4 November, 2010, The Blue Water, Wadduwa, Sri Lanka

The seventh RSC meeting of MFF will be held in Wadduwa, Sri Lanka, approximately 40 kilometres south of Colombo. Representatives from all eight Focal countries will be present at the seventh RSC as it marks the conclusion of Phase one and will focus on preparation and planning for the second phase of MFF (2010-2013).

Open Learning day – At the previous RSC meeting (January 2010), it was decided that future RSC meetings would be combined with a learning event to provide a valuable opportunity to share knowledge and learning outcomes from the many MFF projects across the region being supported by MFF and its partners. This year for the first time, focal countries will be able to showcase their communication and learning materials to highlight their achievements during MFF Phase 1.

The theme of the learning event is: "*Building environmental and livelihood resilience in coastal and other vulnerable communities*".

In a mini-expo style the Open Learning day is aimed at the RSC and members of the NCB Sri Lanka, MFF project holders, other invited organizations and the media. The range of products from across the region will include videos, audio recordings, brochures, posters, books, and tool-kits. Participants will be able to view all of the knowledge products prepared by MFF as well as meet with members of the MFF Regional Secretariat for advice on Large Projects, Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation, and Communication and Knowledge Management.

Mangrove Ecology, Management and Restoration Training Course, 3-5 March 2011, Florida, USA

The 9th annual Mangrove Ecology, Management and Restoration Training Course will be held 3-5 March 2011, in Hollywood, Florida, USA, at the site of a successful and award winning 500 ha mangrove restoration project located within the Anne Kolb Nature Center and West Lake Park. The course will be taught by Roy R. "Robin" Lewis III, an international expert on mangrove restoration and designer of the West Lake project.

West Lake Part Mangrove Restoration Sequence, 1989 - 1996

Time zero - July 1989

Time zero +28 months - November 1991

Time zero + 78 months- January 1996

Time sequence photographs of a portion of the 500 ha West Lake Park mangrove restoration project utilizing non-native exotic plan removal, site excavation, tidal creek restoration, and natural recruitment of mangrove propagules. No planting of mangroves took place. Copyright Lewis Environmental Services, Inc. 2004.

For more information about the Mangrove Ecology, Management and Restoration Training Course in 2011 visit www.mangroverestoration.com or mail to: lesrrl3@aol.com

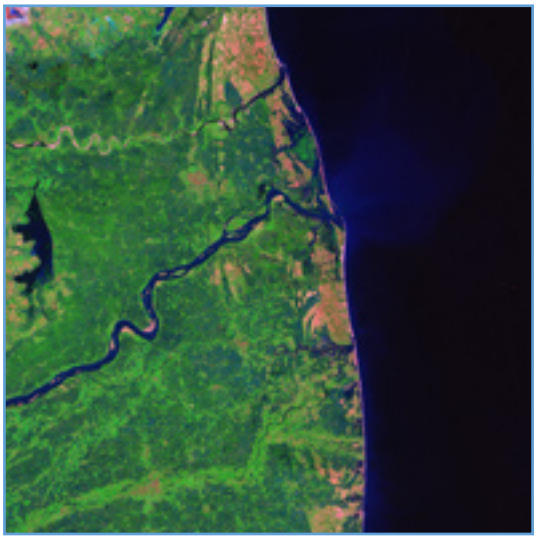
In the news

Research paper - Status and distribution of mangrove forests of the world using earth observation satellite data, *Global Ecology and Biogeography*

The most definitive map of Earth's mangrove forests has been created with Landsat data. The new satellite imagery has given scientists the most comprehensive and exact data on the distribution and decline of mangrove forests from across the world, published recently in Global Ecology and Biogeography. A group of scientists, led by Chandra Giri from USGS-EROS, has calculated that approximately 53,190 square miles (137, 760 km²) of mangroves exists, which is 12.3 percent less than the previously accepted 2007 estimate produced by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization.

Journal Reference: Giri. C, Ochieng. E, Tieszen. L. L, Zhu. Z, Singh. A, Loveland. T, Duke. N,. Status and distribution of mangrove forests of the world using earth observation satellite data. Global Ecology and Biogeography, July 2010.

Read a related news article



Satellite image of mangrove forests in Culladore, near the Kollidam river, India. *Image courtesy of NASA*

Staff additions

Ms Janalezza Morvenna A. Esteban: Jana has recently joined the MFF Secretariat as the MFF Regional Knowledge Management Officer. Jana is a Filipino national and has had more than eight years of project management experience in the fields of social development and environmental management. She completed a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science from the Ateneo de Manila University as well as graduate coursework in Development Policy at De La Salle University Manila, and holds a Masters in Social Sciences degree (major in Geography) from the University of Waikato, New Zealand. Her work experience in different countries has given her a perspective of undertaking science and development work that is both local and international. Before joining IUCN, Jana has worked as program officer in an NGO; formation coordinator in a university social action center; and development/business development coordinator for an international development and environmental management firm. Jana's travel and research have allowed her to co-author two scientific papers on mangrove rehabilitation management and community development.
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Ms Edwina Hollander: Edwina is the Regional Communication Officer at IUCN Asia Regional Office and she will be providing communication support to the MFF Secretariat. Edwina is an Australian national and she has had more than ten years experience of work in environmental related fields, with a focus on science communication during the last five. Holding a Bachelor of Arts/Science, from James Cook University, Queensland, Australia, and a science research Honours degree from the University of Tasmania, Australia, Edwina also has environmental research experience ranging from tropical Australia, the Galapagos Islands to Antarctica. Edwina also undertook a Graduate Diploma of Science Communication at the Australian National University and she has since worked in various science communication roles in a science discovery centre and at CSIRO, an Australian research organisation. Most recently Edwina worked as the Communication Officer at the IUCN Bangladesh Country Office.
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Newsletter contributions

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?

Send us your latest news and other activities to: e-news@mangrovesforthefuture.org

To subscribe to this e-newsletter please sign up on-line at: www.mangrovesforthefuture.org

Nature's Gift: the Pichavaram mangrove wetlands, Tamil Nadu, India

About MFF

Mangroves for the Future (MFF), is a unique partner-led initiative to promote investment in coastal ecosystems 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 several outreach 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. Produced by the MFF Regional Secretariat with the financial support of Norad and Sida.