



For immediate release

International Mangroves Day, 26 July 2016: Mangroves For The Future – Contributing to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Bangkok, Thailand, 26 July 2016 — To celebrate International Mangroves Day, Mangroves for the Future (MFF) has released a multimedia story (<http://bit.ly/2a64PXD>) showcasing its achievements and efforts across 11 countries towards achieving the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are part of the 2030 Agenda - a new global framework - to help eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development by 2030.

All 17 Sustainable Development Goals are connected to MFF's Strategic focus areas: coastal rehabilitation; livelihood support; and resilience-building and empowerment, with climate change and gender as key cross-cutting issues. SDGs Number 1 on poverty, Number 5 on gender, Number 14 on ocean resources and increasingly Number 17 on global partnerships are particularly central to MFF's current work and long-term plans.

In terms of SDG Goal 1 'End poverty in all its forms everywhere', MFF focuses on promoting livelihood activities that are environmentally sound, economically realistic and sustainable. The programme develops models to guide livelihood restoration in post disaster situations, encourage replicable community led ecotourism activities, restore fisheries in tsunami affected areas and help market non-fish mangrove products.

In Sri Lanka, projects focusing on livelihood diversification reported significant increases in monthly income for beneficiaries. In Indonesia, women groups in Tomini Bay have been introduced to, and adopted livelihood improvement activities in combination with mangrove rehabilitation. A number of women groups in Java also had interactive discussions on mangrove ecosystem management and its benefits for households.

SDG Goal 5 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls' is well-aligned with IUCN's gender policy which calls for the promotion of equity and equality as a crucial factor for environmental sustainability and an integral part of all conservation efforts. 55 (31%) of the 177 Small Grants Facility (SGF) projects implemented from 2010-2015 had a gender component and were designed and implemented to meet the gender needs and interests of both women and men. More than 80% of these gender-responsive projects resulted in a visible increase in women's income, including providing education and skills development to women and their families. This trend is continuing in 2016 with MFF's Cycle 5 projects.

"With increasing capacity for monitoring gender impacts and women's empowerment, MFF projects are increasingly able to demonstrate their responsiveness to context-specific gender needs and interests, and to make contributions towards closing the gender gap by improving women's access to and control over resources," says **Ms. Maeve Nightingale, gender focal point for IUCN Asia and MFF.**

MFF is also a driving force behind SDG Goal 14 'Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development', by influencing policy and encouraging local communities to adopt best practices in effective and responsible coastal management. In Maldives, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and Thailand for example, an MFF project enabled and supported natural resource governance that integrates and builds on the respective strengths of local and community-based management as well as national policy and legal frameworks at different levels.

Increasingly, as a key component of its sustainability strategy, MFF touches on SDG 17 'Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development'. *"MFF's governance structure brings government, civil*

*society and private sector together to take action at the national level, and cooperate at the regional level to contribute to the conservation of coastal areas,” said **Dr. Steen Christensen, MFF Coordinator.** “The programme’s unique partnership of diverse stakeholders across countries facilitates knowledge sharing and provides opportunities for transboundary cooperation.”*

Moving forward, MFF aims to ramp up its private sector engagement efforts which currently include partnerships with Marriott and Thai Union Group. MFF is working towards helping companies to assess and mitigate their impacts, connect with their supply chain and ensure sustainable sourcing for their businesses, connect with local communities and optimize return on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) investment, explore new green products and services which can benefit coastal communities and adopt sustainable practices.

For more information or to set up interviews, please contact:

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About Mangroves for the Future

Mangroves for the Future (MFF) is a partnership-based regional initiative which promotes investment in coastal ecosystem conservation for sustainable development. MFF focuses on the role that healthy, well-managed coastal ecosystems play in building the resilience of ecosystem-dependent coastal communities in Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar, Pakistan, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam. The initiative uses mangroves as a flagship ecosystem, but MFF is inclusive of all types of coastal ecosystem, such as coral reefs, estuaries, lagoons, sandy beaches, sea grasses and wetlands. MFF is co-chaired by IUCN and UNDP, and is funded by Danida, Norad, and Sida and the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Thailand.

Website: www.mangrovesforthefuture.org | Facebook: [mangrovesforthefuture](https://www.facebook.com/mangrovesforthefuture)

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About IUCN

IUCN is a membership Union uniquely composed of both government and civil society organisations. It provides public, private and non-governmental organisations with the knowledge and tools that enable human progress, economic development and nature conservation to take place together.

Created in 1948, IUCN has evolved into the world’s largest and most diverse environmental network. It harnesses the experience, resources and reach of its 1,300 Member organisations and the input of some 15,000 experts. IUCN is the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it. Our experts are organised into six commissions dedicated to species survival, environmental law, protected areas, social and economic policy, ecosystem management, and education and communication.

The ability to convene diverse stakeholders and provide the latest science, objective recommendations and on-the-ground expertise drives IUCN’s mission of informing and empowering conservation efforts worldwide. We provide a neutral forum in which governments, NGOs, scientists, businesses, local communities, indigenous peoples groups, faith-based organisations and others can work together to forge and implement solutions to environmental challenges.

By facilitating these solutions, IUCN provides governments and institutions at all levels with the impetus to achieve universal goals, including on biodiversity, climate change and sustainable development, which IUCN was instrumental in defining.

