



SEYCHELLES CONSERVATION
AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION
TRUST

SeyCCAT

Blue Grants Fund Progress Report 2017-2019





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AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION
TRUST

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MESSAGE FROM ANGELIQUE POUPONNEAU *CEO OF SEYCCAT*

I am proud to present the 2017 – 2019 Blue Grants Fund Progress Report.

Established in 2015, our small but ambitious organisation started its operations in 2016. It quickly set up the governance structures and the framework required for providing sustainable financing flows. The Blue Grants Fund (BGF) was initially established to host the proceeds of the debt-for-nature swap. By 2018, the BGF had more than tripled in size from US\$ 200,000 to US\$ 700,000 as SeyCCAT was tasked with managing US\$ 3 million of the proceeds of the Seychelles' first sovereign Blue Bond.

In April 2017, SeyCCAT reached the momentous milestone of launching its first request for proposals and since then, has annually disbursed funds to support Seychellois initiatives with the goal of disbursing US\$ 700,000 annually. Despite the early challenges of ensuring access to the BGF, these have now been overcome with increasing demand and access to the BGF. In 2019 alone, the number of projects stood at 21, compared to 7 the year before. The funds have increased awareness of the importance of ocean health and climate action, propelled meaningful action, and sparked important women and youth involvement. SeyCCAT is now supported by more than 10 international partners, including philanthropic organisations, multilateral banks and associations of marine scientific research. Due to dedication, commitment and hard work, SeyCCAT has been recognised as a blue economy expert leading cutting-edge work both nationally and internationally. It supports the execution of the first debt-for-nature swap for ocean conservation and climate adaptation and the creation of a marine spatial plan for 1.35 million km². Our most recent endeavour involved supporting the Government of Seychelles with the integration of Blue Carbon habitats, in particular seagrass meadows in the nationally determined contributions to achieve its climate commitments. With a view to ensuring 'no one is left behind', 67% of our projects support small-scale fishers to advance sustainable fisheries and ensure their future livelihoods.

We are proud to have designed a fund that works for the people and the planet. The work of SeyCCAT is aligned with the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The following report presents different projects and their outcomes, classified according to the different thematic areas of the SDGs: people, planet, prosperity and partnership.

This report celebrates SeyCCAT's success stories and aims to share key learnings with the rest of the world. You will learn more about SeyCCAT's work through the words of the people reached through the different projects we financed over the last three years.



Angelique Pouponneau
- CEO of SeyCCAT

ABOUT SEYCCAT

Achieving conservation through innovative finance and creative collaborations.

The Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT) is a conservation finance trust fund with the aim of supporting sustainable development in the Seychelles.

Vision: SeyCCAT envisions Seychelles' oceans and islands being stewarded by the people of Seychelles and generating sustainable benefits.

Mission: SeyCCAT strategically invests in ocean stakeholders to generate new learning, bold action and sustainable blue prosperity in Seychelles.

Goal: To competitively disperse at least US\$ 700,000 per annum to support the stewardship of Seychelles' ocean resources, island life and blue economy.

SeyCCAT's Evolution

The Trust was initially capitalised with proceeds from the Government of Seychelles' US\$21.6M debt conversion that was completed in 2015. With the support of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), this deal enabled the Government of Seychelles to make a commitment to safeguard 30% of its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) through marine protection areas.

SeyCCAT's function in this financial transaction involves three cash flows:

1. To repay the impact investor,
2. To annually distribute US\$200,000 via a Blue Grants Fund, and
3. To capitalise an endowment fund with US\$ 151,000 p/a, with an expected maturity value of US\$ 6.7 M.

In 2018, the Government of Seychelles issued a US\$ 15 million sovereign Blue Bond. 20% of the proceeds from the Seychelles' sovereign Blue Bond further capitalised SeyCCAT's Blue Grants Fund to support sustainable-use marine protection areas (MPAs) and improved governance of priority fisheries.

SeyCCAT provides a sustainable flow of funds to the Blue Grants Fund that finances projects to support the long-term management and expansion of the Seychelles' system of MPAs, sustainable fisheries, and other activities that contribute substantially to the conservation, protection and maintenance of biodiversity and the adaptation to climate change.

The projects that SeyCCAT finances support the implementation of all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) but with significant emphasis on SDGs 14, 13 and 17. SeyCCAT is committed to sharing our learnings with other island and coastal States across the Western Indian Ocean (WIO).



THE BLUE GRANTS FUND

The Blue Grants Fund aims to annually disburse US\$700 000 towards the implementation of projects.

The projects seek to achieve SeyCCAT's five strategic objectives:



Support new and existing marine and coastal protected areas and sustainable use zones.



Empower the fisheries sector with robust science and knowhow to improve governance, sustainability, value and market options.



Promote the rehabilitation of marine and coastal habitats and ecosystems that have been degraded by local and global impacts.



Develop and implement risk reduction and social resilience plans to adapt to the effects of climate change.



Trial and nurture business models to secure the sustainable development of Seychelles' blue economy.

Funds allocated for each strategic objective:



6.9M



7.3M



0.9M



0.2M



0.5M

Highlights

1.5
million
USD

Over US\$ 1.5 million (approx. US\$ 1,550,857) disbursed since 2017.

34
grants

34 grants issued from the Blue Grants Fund since 2017.



58% of projects are led by women.



13 projects are led by youth or youth are the main beneficiaries.



23 projects seek to advance sustainable fisheries.



10 projects aim to support the local community to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

PART I: PEOPLE



We live in times of unprecedented environmental change that present great challenges for people and businesses. However, we also have an unparalleled opportunity for positive change – the science is clearer, awareness is greater, and innovation more powerful than ever before. At the end of the day, it is the people and their mindset that make the ultimate difference in the progress or demise of any idea or concept. The blue economy is no different in that regard. As a blue thinking nation, it is imperative to grasp the blue economy idea and appreciate the difference it can and will make in our lives and the lives of generations to come.

To ensure we support people, we must “close income and wealth gaps, and promote access to more and better-quality jobs”. It will also examine how governments, the education system, businesses and civil society can address growing inequality by expanding access to learning and health. Since 2017, SeyCCAT has funded projects that give people skills to gain more control of their futures and the blue economy future of Seychelles. Some of the projects presented in this section aim to provide skills to groups such as youth and women, so they are able to invest in projects and jobs related to the development of the blue economy sector in Seychelles.

BLUE ECONOMY INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME



SeyCCAT grant
SCR 99 697

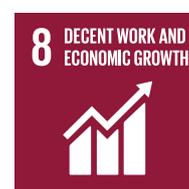
Co-financing
SCR 18 750

Description:

In 2016, the SIDS Youth AIMS Hub (SYAH), a youth-led NGO promoting sustainable development through youth-led projects, launched the 'Blue Economy Internship Programme' (BEIP) initiative. This initiative serves to promote sustainable development opportunities for young people in the Blue Economy by exposing them to opportunities within the existing framework. The programme enables Seychellois youth aged between 15-30 years to undertake a two-week internship in different local organisations that fall within the blue economy sector. As a merit-based programme, BEIP introduces youth from all backgrounds to the myriad of career opportunities offered by the blue economy.

Key Successes:

- 4 editions of the programme since 2016.
- 110 youth have benefited from increased awareness of the myriad of careers and business opportunities within the blue economy. 90 of the 110 beneficiaries are women.
- 50% of the former blue economy interns have obtained further internship or job opportunities within their host organisations or proceeded for further studies within the blue economy spectrum.
- Endorsement of the programme by the Vice President of Seychelles and support from the Commonwealth.
- Recognised as an exemplary youth-led initiative to be replicated in other countries.



Key Findings:

- Every year, the programme has seen a substantial increase in the number of applications received (31% and 42% in 2017 and 2018 respectively) as demand and interest grows among the youth.
- An increase in organisations volunteering to host interns has also been observed for every edition (2 new host organisations approaching SYAH to join the programme every year). This demonstrates the important value of the BEIP to organisations as well.

Youth-led project:

A total of 33 youth were directly involved in the 4th edition of the project.

MARINE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME



SeyCCAT grant
SCR 998 563

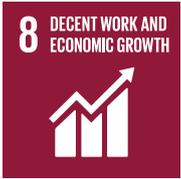
Co-financing
SCR 809 701

Description:

There is an increasing emphasis on the blue economy and marine conservation sectors in Seychelles, both of which are important to the future of the Seychelles' economy and environment. To connect these important national level commitments to the Seychellois public and workforce, there is a need to increase capacity, interest and employment opportunities for young Seychellois adults. The Marine Scholarship Programme offers a nine-month in-depth training, aimed at Seychellois young adults without higher education qualifications. Training includes six months of core training and three months



of placements with partner organisations, aiming to increase knowledge of the marine environment and the blue economy. Through skills and expertise developed in this bespoke training programme, participants will gain networks and exposure to the industry, increased employment opportunities and further education in the marine sector.



Objectives:

- To develop a marine science and conservation training programme for young adults in Seychelles, offering a comprehensive overview of theoretical and practical skills in a Seychellois context.
- To deliver two training programmes, each over a nine-month period with a minimum of six participants per programme, between the ages of 18 and 25, including placements with partner organisations.
- To build local capacity in the blue economy sectors, by engaging and providing educational and vocational opportunities to young adult Seychellois nationals.
- To increase access to marine and blue economy employment opportunities for young adult Seychellois.

SEAWEEDS: A HIDDEN RESOURCE – A RECYCLING PROJECT



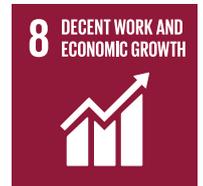
SeyCCAT grant
SCR 100 000

Co-financing
SCR 250 00

Description:

The project is designed to address two challenges: an increase in the deposition of seaweed on beaches and the provision of compost for home gardens. With an increasing emphasis on food security, there is a growing demand for good compost for home gardens and agriculture. Whilst home organic waste is being used, it is not sufficient. In the meantime, the beaches around Mahé are covered with seaweed that is swept up in the mornings by the staff of the Land Waste Management Agency and left unused. There is scope to use seaweed as a component for composting thereby contributing to a circular economy.

The project beneficiaries will be 7 – 11 vulnerable and disadvantaged women and girls that WASO works with in its business incubator at Providence. These persons will have the opportunity to earn an income through an activity that is profitable, meaningful and fulfilling for them.



The project will be done in 3 phases:

- Training of the women and girls by the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change.
- Collection and composting of seaweed.
- Marketing and sale of compost.

Objectives:

- To reduce by an estimated 15% the amount of seaweed on the beaches of Mahé, especially along the east coast.
- To produce at least 150kg of high-quality compost for sale to home gardeners.
- To increase the income of disadvantaged and vulnerable women and girls engaged in this activity by at least 70%, from minimum wage to earnings of up to SCR12,000 monthly.

Elisabeth Simeon - WASO member

“This project will benefit the women participating for one, for their own personal household as it will ensure they will have a decent salary. The seaweed will also be a great resource for gardens and agriculture businesses in the country as we have a severe lack of options for natural fertiliser in Seychelles. I found this project very interesting as we use natural resources available locally, by first cleaning the beach, which is good for the community and then making full use of this resource to generate revenue for women in difficulty.”



CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO CLIMATE CHANGE



SeyCCAT grant

SCR 100 000

Co-financing

SCR 100 000

Description:

The funds disbursed have been used to complete a Creole version of the Citizen's Guide to Climate Change booklet. The funds will be used to print both English and Creole versions of this booklet. The use of the booklet will support national efforts to educate the public about climate change mitigation and adaptation measures which they can take home, to school and to the work place. The booklet will be disseminated to schools and other public venues such as clinics and community centers.

Objectives:

- Educate 1,000 people of all age groups and socio-economic backgrounds through the dissemination of the Citizen's Guide to Climate Change booklet in both English and Creole.
- Support climate change workshops and other climate change education activities around Mahé, Praslin and La Digue.



Rajelle Barbe - Community Engagement Specialist - EBA project

"The Citizen's Guide to Climate Change is a very practical tool to educate Seychellois about climate change. It is very straight forward and provides simple suggestions that will allow people to adapt their lifestyles towards climate change in Seychelles. I work a lot with communities and have had the chance to use the guide in workshops and meetings and have received positive feedback. I think the guide is a must-have for any education and awareness programme related to climate change in Seychelles."

This guide can be accessed via the following link : <http://www.s4seychelles.com/publications.html>

VARIABILITY IN TROPHIC SIGNATURES OF ZOOPLANKTON AND FOOD WEB DYNAMICS WITHIN SEYCHELLES' WATERS

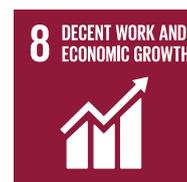


SeyCCAT grant
SCR 250 000

Co-financing by
Seychelles
Fishing Authority
SCR 596 000

Description:

The Seychelles' archipelago is a major marine biodiversity hotspot with key marine ecosystems supporting important subsistence and commercial fisheries. Concerns have emerged regarding the resilience of the Seychelles' ecosystems to increasing human pressures. Improving our understanding of food webs' trophodynamics is critical to ensure effective sustainable ecosystem management. Taking advantage of the NEKTON deep sea expedition held in Seychelles' waters and the high-level expertise of international project partners, the project mainly aims to build capacity in marine ecology research, from field work to laboratory and data analysis, and to gain essential knowledge on how food webs are controlled, especially the role of plankton in transferring energy from the base of the food web to predatory demersal fish. The results should give insights into the effects of anthropogenic pressure(s) and/or environmental variability on the functioning of Seychelles' ecosystems.



Objectives:

- New information on food web dynamics will be collected and made available in areas which are characterised by major differences in environmental and human pressure.
- Comparative knowledge on the trophic positions and role of the targeted commercial fish species within these areas will provide insights into their sensitivity to top-down effects through fishing versus bottom-up control.
- The nutritional composition in essential fatty acids (omega) in the white muscle of the six commercial species will provide insight into their nutritional benefit and value for human health and commercialisation for example, for processing purposes, export, and fast-growing and fattening mariculture.

This expedition and research will build capacity through:

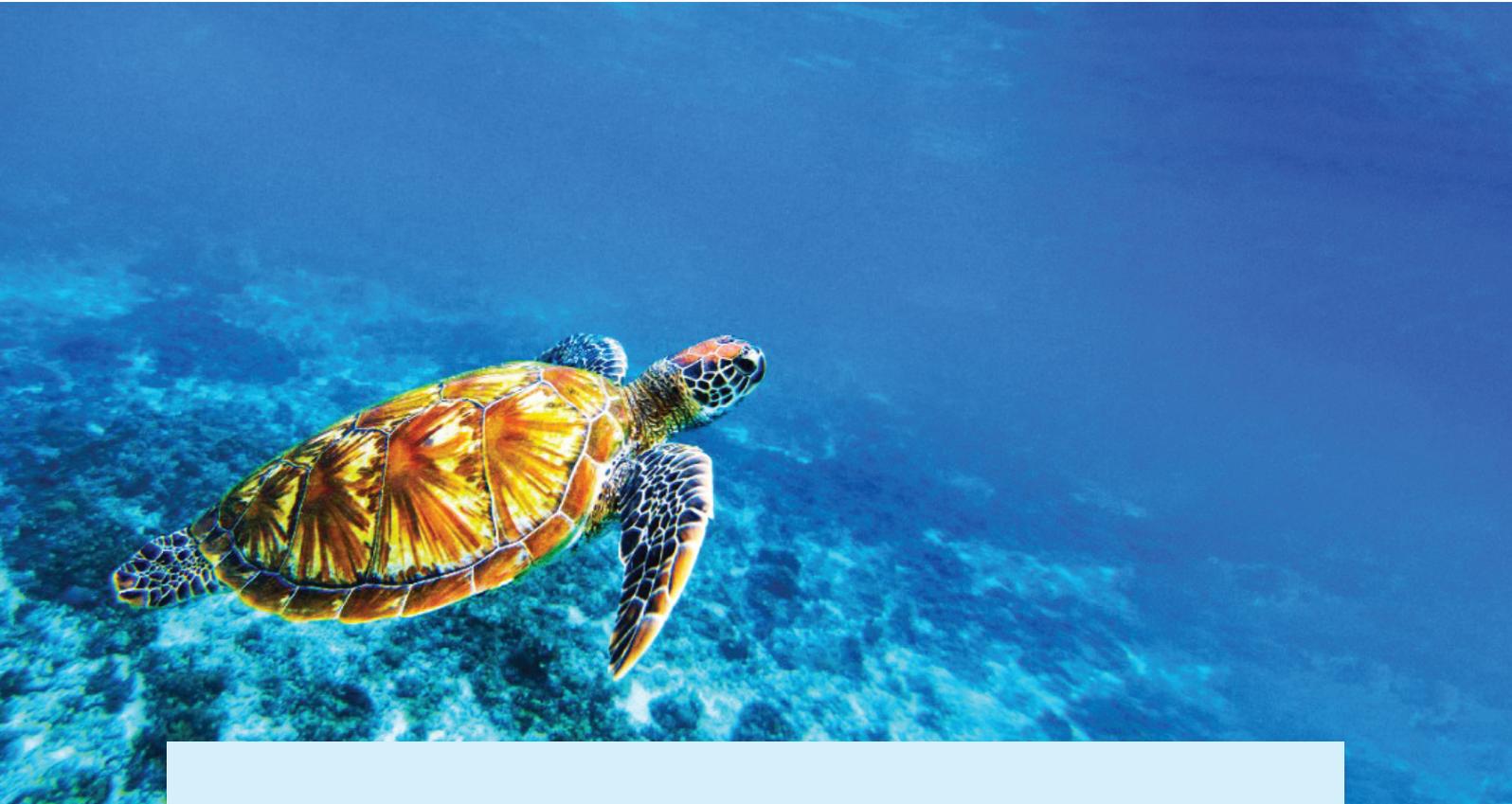
- Field training of Seychellois technicians in plankton sampling.
- Laboratory training of 1 Seychellois in the analysis of trophic tracers in marine organisms.
- Data analysis training of Seychellois scientists in food web statistical modelling using trophic tracers' data.



Stephanie Marie

“I have had the privilege to participate in all the scientific activities that have been happening and collecting the samples needed for our project alongside samples needed for the other projects. I would like to encourage the youth in the world and in Seychelles to always go after what they want, even if it may look impossible at first. Even if you think you will never make it, trust me you will. Always believe in yourself and trust that The Man upstairs will bring you where you need to be, even though it will feel like it is taking ages. Always do things from the heart and stay positive, no matter what. Don't let anything define your capabilities to reach where you want in life. Reach for the galaxy, the stars are too close.”

PART 2: PLANET



The threat of climate change continues to manifest itself through rising global temperatures and more frequent extreme weather events. While a shifting climate exacerbates biodiversity loss, the main factors behind this continuous decline remain overexploitation of wild animal and plant species, and loss of habitat driven by industry. The SDGs set a goal to protect the planet “so it can support the needs of the present and future generations”. Nearly every day, we are seeing just how connected and fundamental the climate is to global development. SeyCCAT funded several projects to advance the understanding of marine biodiversity and fisheries in order to inform better policies and marine protection. Through community-led engagements, people have taken action to help save the planet.

SPATIAL ECOLOGY AND RESPONSE TO CATCH-AND-RELEASE OF RECREATIONALLY TARGETTED FISH SPECIES ON ST. FRANCOIS AND ALPHONSE ATOLLS



SeyCCAT grant
SCR1000 000

Co-financing
SCR 3 647 660

Description:

The St. François and Alphonse Atolls are internationally known as the best locations for fly-fishing. This research will provide valuable data for the sustainability of this fishery. When caught, the Giant Trevallies are implanted with a tracking device and PIT tags which will help the team of scientists to scan them. It will then reveal whether that particular fish has been previously caught and released. When, where, and how often Giant Trevallies are recaptured is valuable information for identifying fishing interactions. A small fin clip collected from each of the tagged Giant Trevallies allows the research team to look at the genetic structure of the Alphonse population as well as their trophic feeding ecology. Tracking device collection stations anchored around the atolls pick up the tracker as fish pass by, providing key data on fish movements and whether individual fish have a preference for a particular location. Addressing such questions can inform management decisions for the Alphonse Island Group as well as act as a model for sustainable recreational fisheries throughout the Seychelles and the region.

Objectives:

- To provide data to inform evidence-based conservation and management actions, such as rotating flats open to fishing and best handling practices of caught and released fish.
- To promote both economic prosperity and conservation of healthy marine ecosystems, so the benefits of establishing sustainable recreational fisheries on these atolls can be extended to the entire region reliant on their natural resources.

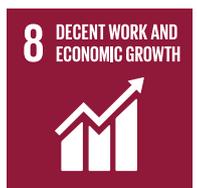
Progress:

- 74 successful surgeries implanting acoustic transmitters have been conducted on Giant Trevallies.
- Through two successful and complete downloads of the acoustic receiver array, we have retrieved data in the form of 1,627,994 detections of Giant Trevallies.
- 61 individual tagged Giant Trevallies have been detected by the acoustic array.
- 248 Giant Trevallies PIT tagged to date. PIT tagging provides information on frequency of recaptures, growth rates and could ultimately enable us to estimate the Alphonse Group GT population.

Key preliminary findings:

- On average, each Giant Trevally has a home range of around 4km.
- Acoustic data shows Giant Trevallies to be more resident to specific areas than expected.

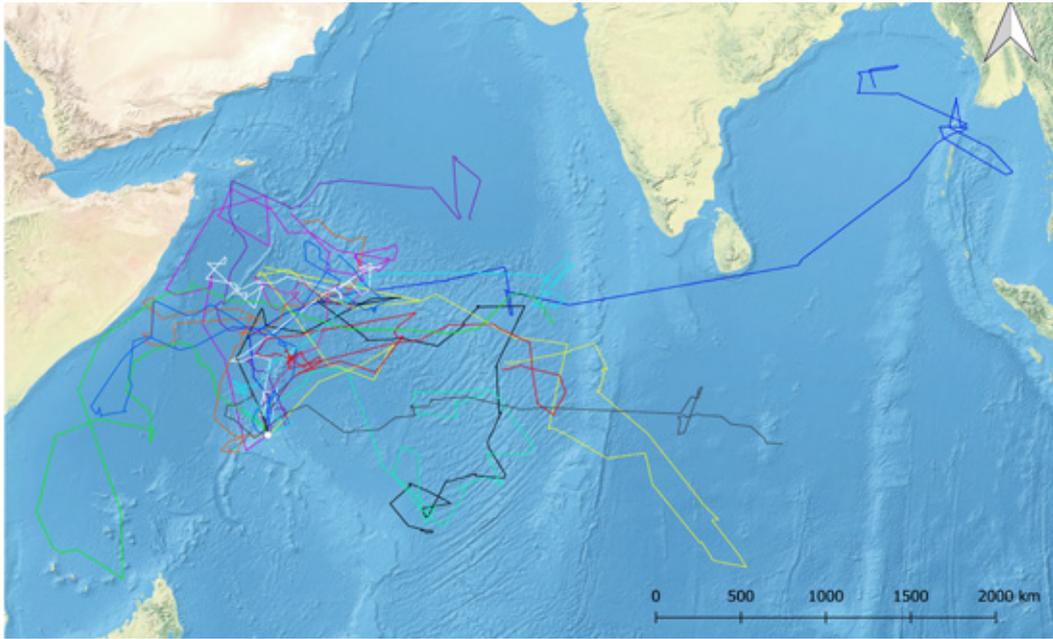
FIRST USE OF SATELLITE TELEMETRY ON JUVENILE SOOTY TERNS TO DEFINE POTENTIAL MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



SeyCCAT grant
SCR 903 600

Co-financing
SCR 575 290

WHERE ARE THEY?



Tracks showing the dispersal of the 14 sooty tern chicks fitted with satellite transmitters for the first 3 months after fledging from Bird Island.

Description:

The Sooty Tern is the most abundant seabird in Seychelles, nesting mainly in large colonies. Ringing, geolocator and GPS investigations have shown that it is also highly pelagic. Upon fledgling, juveniles remain at sea for up to 5 years before returning to breed. Where they go on first departure from the breeding colony is unknown but is likely to be an important destination with predictable food abundance (fish and squid). As such, it may represent an important area for many top predators and thus an area of high conservation significance for marine resources. This project aims to identify this area by tracking departing Sooty Tern fledglings using satellite telemetry.

Objectives:

- Address the gap in knowledge on where juvenile Sooty Terns go on their first departure from the breeding colony.
- Through the tracking of juvenile Sooty Terns, identify highly productive foraging areas or “hotspots” used by them.
- Once these productive foraging areas are identified, identify candidate marine protection areas to inform the marine spatial planning process.



Dr Joanna Smith -The Nature Conservancy

“This project led by Dr Rachel Bristol in collaboration with partners Prof. Chris Feare, Christine Larose and Bird Island, has provided the Seychelles MSP with the first available information for specific areas used within the EEZ by juvenile Sooty Terns (*Onchoprion fuscatus*), namely north of the Mahé Plateau and extending to Coco de Mer ridge. This data advances our understanding of habitats used by these young birds after fledging.”

ASSESSMENT AND VALUATION OF THE PARROTFISH FISHERY



SeyCCAT grant
SCR 498 000

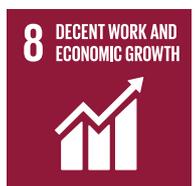
Co-financing
SCR 482 500

Description:

Parrotfish are keystone species in coral reef ecosystems, essential for maintaining live coral cover and healthy resilient coral reefs. The 1997 severe coral bleaching event resulted in more than 40% of coral reefs on the Mahé plateau shifting to an algal dominated state with significantly reduced fish diversity and populations. It is likely that the mass bleaching event of 2016 will only serve to exacerbate this situation. Management and research in the Caribbean have shown that protecting parrotfish populations results in improving live coral cover on reefs and enhanced resilience to multiple stressors. In Seychelles however, there is no baseline data available on the parrotfish fishery, its species make-up, seasonality or economic value. Such information is a fundamental prerequisite to the development of any parrotfish management measure. This project sets out to address this information shortfall.

Key Successes:

- Monitoring protocol for Seychelles Parrotfish fishery developed – with a species identification guide and 2 training workshops for 29 technical staff from 6 agencies.
- 12-month intensive monitoring of parrotfish fishery undertaken. The parrotfish catch of more than 1800 trap landings was examined and sorted by species, with over 8 metric tons of parrotfish weighed and/or measured. Species content and seasonality identified; length-weight relationships established for the 12 most common species established. 21 species of parrotfish confirmed as present in the Seychelles, 18 of which were recorded in the fishery catch.



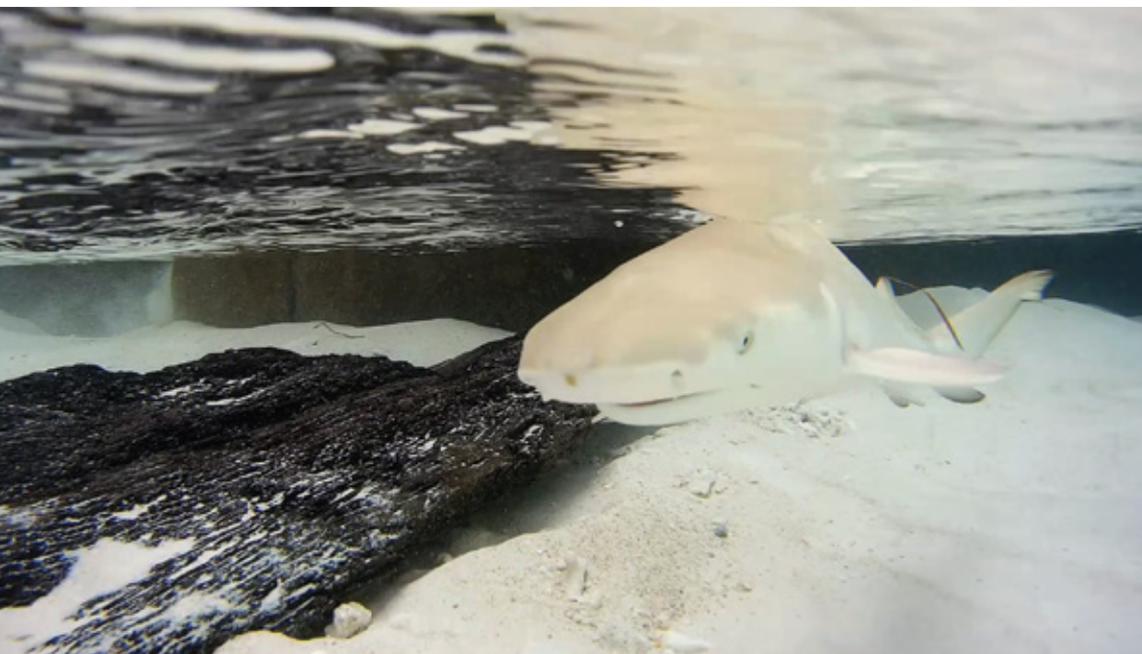
- Establishment of a national parrotfish fishery database that will be shared with the Seychelles Fishing Authority.
- Price per kilogramme of parrotfish through the year ascertained relative to market and in comparison, with rabbitfish, another key component of the trap fishery.



Neddy Labrosse -Fisherman, Roche Caiman

“I learned a lot about parrotfish species thanks to the project of John Nevill. It is also a source of income for me as I go to fish and bring parrotfish every day to John Nevill for his study.”

ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CURIEUSE NATIONAL PARK IN THE PROTECTION OF THE CRITICAL EARLY LIFE STAGES OF SICKLEFIN LEMON SHARKS



SeyCCAT grant
SCR 550 000

Co-financing
SCR 550 000

Description:

The sicklefin lemon shark is categorised as vulnerable (IUCN 2014), and it faces many threats to its continued survival. The species is fished throughout its range and its small habitat range and limited movement patterns make it susceptible to local depletion since dispersal is limited. For effective protection of shark species, it is



important to gain an understanding of spatial movements and habitat preferences. The installation of an acoustic receiver array along the north and east coast of Curieuse Island, together with the acoustic tagging of 20 neonates, will enhance the knowledge of sicklefin lemon shark spatial ecology. Furthermore, results from this project will enable recommendations with regards to the protection of this particular species. Curieuse Marine National Park is a key tourism site in the inner islands. The island is surrounded by a shallow fringing reef and seagrass beds and has a healthy stand of mangroves. These habitats serve as key sea turtle feeding and nesting grounds as well as providing nursery habitats for key ecological species such as sicklefin lemon sharks.



Objectives:

- Obtain an improved understanding of spatial behaviour and habitat use of 20 neonate *N. acutidens* within Curieuse Marine National Park by monitoring their movements for six months using acoustic transmitters.
- Refine mark-recapture population estimates of neonate *N. acutidens* within Curieuse Marine National Park using mark-recapture methods within 18 months.
- Provide critical habitat data to national park managers and stakeholders within Curieuse Marine National Park and other protected areas to better inform management decisions regarding the conservation of *N. acutidens* and its nurseries within 18 months.

To date:

- 12 acoustic receivers deployed at shallow and deep sites within Curieuse Marine National Park. PIT tagging of new cohort of neonate *N. acutidens* commenced upon their arrival in October, and is continuing.
- 20 neonate *N. acutidens* successfully implanted with acoustic transmitters - tracking currently underway.

Preliminary findings:

- A total of 329,208 detections for analysis from transmitters implanted in 20 sharks, between the 24th of October 2019 and the 22nd of May 2020.
- Of the total detections, only 1,203 detections were recorded on receivers placed in deeper water, suggesting a very strong preference for shallow water habitats.
- At least four individuals appear to remain active within the range of the receivers, which broadly correlates with observed capture rate patterns during PIT tagging surveys.
- Presentation held at UniSey to disseminate details of the project prior to field implementation.



Demien Mougol, Ranger, Seychelles National Parks Authority

“This project has opened a world of opportunity for me, offering me the chance to further develop my knowledge about the sicklefin lemon sharks and adopt the best practices to carry out research”

Learn more about the project via the following video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xi3XUoYj3dg&t=279s>

MARINE BIODIVERSITY BASELINE ASSESSMENT AROUND FREGATE ISLAND



SeyCCAT grant
SCR 305 000

Co-financing
SCR 575 000

Description:

This project proposes data collection for an initial assessment of the coral reef assemblage and associated marine species on Fregate Island in order to assess trends over time by establishing a long-term marine monitoring programme. The data will be collected through standardised marine monitoring scientific methodologies currently employed by GIF, thus can be used to compare findings with other granitic islands. The marine monitoring will be augmented through novel spatial monitoring technologies provided by Coralive.org and Blue Nomads. The research will produce reports about the state of Fregate Island's coral reefs with more specific questions being answered through at least one University of Seychelles Environmental Science bachelor student's final year project. In addition, public awareness of the threats facing coral reefs and marine conservation will be enhanced using state of the art technologies such as 3D virtual reef mosaics. Ultimately, by compiling all the research outlined in this project, we aim to make supplement information available for the Marine Spatial Planning process in Seychelles.



Objectives:

- To address the lack of knowledge regarding marine biodiversity around Fregate Island by undertaking the first biodiversity assessment of the island's coral reef species and coral species diversity.
- To combine data and conclusions of objective one and two to establish a long-term marine monitoring programme for year-on-year comparisons of long-term trends in the structure of reef fish and coral communities.

Youth engagement:

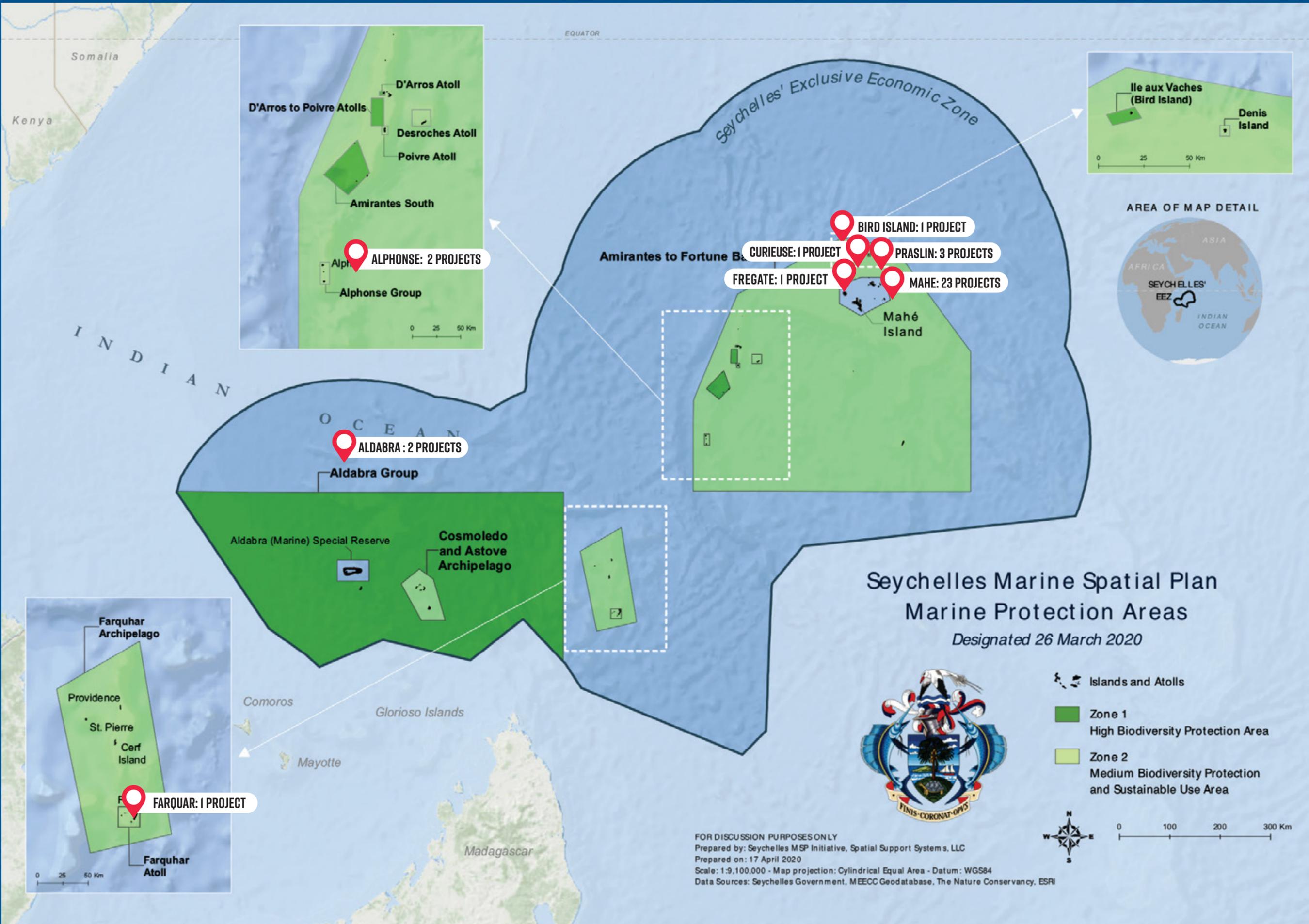
GIF formalised their partnership through the signing of a Memorandum Of Understanding with the University of Seychelles (UniSey). The MOU included having an environmental science student from the University of Seychelles work with GIF to assess the species composition and diversity of fish life, amongst other things, from the video footage obtained from the deployed baited remote underwater video systems (BRUVs) around the granitic island of Fregate.

Evita Delpech – Student, University of Seychelles



“Due to the limited number of baseline studies being carried out in the Seychelles and only a few involving BRUVs, it has been an amazing opportunity to be able to assist in such a survey. After analysing hours of footage, I have gained an in-depth knowledge of the fish species and communities occurring in the Seychelles and an understanding of the importance of data analysis. This project has certainly built a foundation for me in terms of working in a team, time management, communication and even working with certain computer programmes for my data analysis, which I hope will greatly benefit me upon completing my studies in June.”

Learn more about the project via the following video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JD5Ic78axEw&t=3s>



AREA OF MAP DETAIL



BIRD ISLAND: 1 PROJECT
 CURIEUSE: 1 PROJECT
 PRASLIN: 3 PROJECTS
 MAHE: 23 PROJECTS
 FREGATE: 1 PROJECT

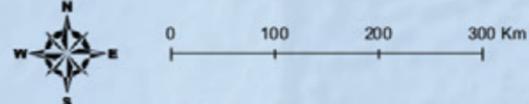
ALDABRA: 2 PROJECTS



Seychelles Marine Spatial Plan Marine Protection Areas Designated 26 March 2020



- Islands and Atolls
- Zone 1
High Biodiversity Protection Area
- Zone 2
Medium Biodiversity Protection and Sustainable Use Area



FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY
 Prepared by: Seychelles MSP Initiative, Spatial Support Systems, LLC
 Prepared on: 17 April 2020
 Scale: 1:9,100,000 - Map projection: Cylindrical Equal Area - Datum: WGS84
 Data Sources: Seychelles Government, MEECC Geodatabase, The Nature Conservancy, ESRI

MAPPING CORAL POPULATION CONNECTIVITY AND OCEAN CURRENTS TO INFORM MANAGEMENT & POLICY OF THE CORAL REEF SYSTEM IN SEYCHELLES

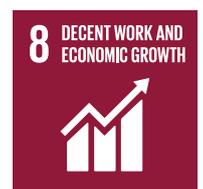


SeyCCAT grant
SCR 1 000 000

Co-financing
SCR 1 863 600

Description:

Seychelles is a unique nation, with 115 islands stretching across an exclusive economic zone of 1.4 million km². This marine area is one of the world's richest biodiversity hotspots. Coral reefs form the base of the marine food web that is so paramount to securing biodiversity and safeguarding ecosystem health and food security in the region. Ensuring coral reef persistence is therefore a top priority for Seychelles, and one that will be hard to deliver given the increasing frequency and severity of global bleaching events, e.g. the 2016 event that caused widespread mass coral mortality across Seychelles. This project will map connectivity among major reefs across Seychelles and this map will be used to determine keystone reefs – defined as highly connected sites that potentially supply larvae to many other reefs in the region. These sites are likely to be critical for recolonisation following disturbance events like bleaching. Identifying these keystone reefs will be an important management tool for Seychelles, that is, allowing conservation resources (time, money, legislation) to be better targeted. As ocean currents distribute coral larvae across marine ecosystems, we will also begin modelling ocean currents across a range of spatial scales using a nested numerical model.



The connectivity mapping will also be useful to better understand dispersal routes of Seychelles' major fisheries, a key factor in sustainable fisheries management. This project will start to fill a major gap in Seychelles' ocean science, allowing Seychelles to better meet the blue economy objective of sustainably managing the exclusive economic zone.

Objectives:

- Determine the connectivity of coral populations across Seychelles.
- Map potential connectivity pathways using high-resolution nested numerical models of ocean currents, together with remote sensing products.
- Develop a coral reef management tool to aid practitioners in coordinated and collaborative planning, data collection and management.

Alain de Comarmond Principal Secretary - Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change



“This project is a first and a landmark one for the country. Though strongly impacted in the past from coral bleaching, Seychelles still has some of the richest coral reef systems in terms of biodiversity in the world, spanning along and across the whole of our EEZ. Such a study on connectivity between our coral reefs is a must and most valuable exercise for conservation purposes but also to contribute to more effective decision-making, particularly for the sustainable-use areas and to continue to inform our Marine Spatial Plan. We need to continue to invest in and carry out research on these valuable ecosystems so that we can understand them better and try and see how they adapt to risks such as climate change especially in terms of their resilience.”

ALDABRA CLEAN-UP PROJECT (ACUP)



SeyCCAT grant
SCR 1 000 000

Co-financing
SCR 2 447 700

Description:

Inappropriately disposed waste washed out from landfills, items discarded into rivers and at sea, along with fishing equipment can all become marine debris which travel long distances and eventually wash onshore. This marine debris accumulates on the beaches of even the most remote and pristine places, like the Aldabra Atoll, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Vast quantities of marine debris have been accumulating for years on Aldabra's shoreline and in recent times this has dramatically accelerated. It is cataclysmically ironic that such an incredible place, inaccessible to most of humanity, can be touched by marine debris which harms this sanctuary's endemic and endangered wildlife. This ever-growing problem can no longer be left unchecked and appropriate action has been taken to cause meaningful change. As such, the removal of accumulated marine debris has been a top priority for SIF. This extraordinary action carried out by a multi-national team has fed currents of change and created waves of actions for improved waste management and reduced plastic pollution throughout the Seychelles, unlocking local capacity to think differently of waste by transforming it into a resource.

Key successes:

- Over 25 metric tonnes of marine plastic pollution removed from Aldabra, a UNESCO world Heritage site;
- Baseline research on the composition, origin, accumulation rate, attached biota, and resources - 10 young people from Seychelles and abroad exposed to Aldabra, empowered to be environmental/Aldabra ambassadors;



- Awareness raising on issues and solutions that directly reached over 5,000 people in Seychelles and UK through presentations, exhibitions, clean-ups, and other education and outreach activities;
- Awareness raising potential that reached tens of millions through international news (Sky News accessible to 110 million households internationally), through live coverage as well as film, and a large national press following across all spectrums (social media, radio, print & TV);
- A 24-minute film and 14-minute film covering the project and expedition created and shared on YouTube, made freely accessible to all schools, played on national TV;
- Upcoming short animated film for children on Aldabra with plastic pollution, but also other issues facing it;
- Recycled/reused over 3.5 tonnes of collected waste by conservation groups, artists, and schools;
- 10 tonnes of collected waste to be sent to a research institution and NGO in Germany to test/experiment for circular economy applications of very degraded marine plastic.

Key findings and recommendations:

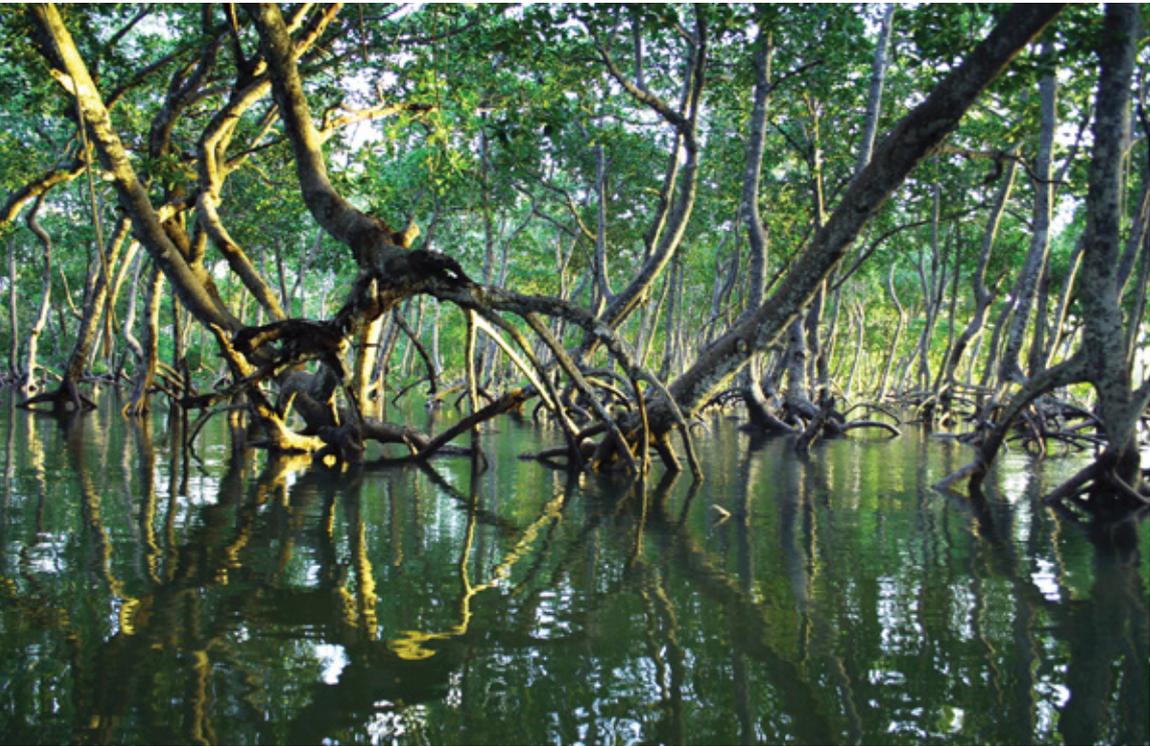
- 514 metric tonnes of marine plastic pollution remain on Aldabra;
- 52% (by weight) of the marine plastic pollution on Aldabra is fishing/ghost gear (discarded and lost rope, nets and buoys) and the next heaviest category is flip flops (22%);
- It would take a team of 12, 172 days and funds of SCR60.8million to completely clear the atoll of marine plastic pollution;
- By recording labels on consumer items, we were able to identify some of their regions and possible state of origin: South East Asia region (i.e. Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Philippines), the Indian subcontinent region (i.e. Sri-Lanka, India and the Maldives) and East Africa (i.e. Comoros and Mauritius). Furthermore, consumer items with labels from states outside of the Indian Ocean (i.e. Japan) were also recorded;
- By photographing and recording the serial numbers of washed ashore Fish Aggregating Devices, we determined that industrial fishing fleets operating in Seychelles' economic exclusive zone are in some part responsible for the issue of marine plastic pollution;
- Beach transects conducted before and during the expedition indicate that 6.5 tonnes of marine plastic pollution arrive on Aldabra's shores annually;
- Beach surveys found that 75% of all trash arriving had attached biota.

Jeremy Raguain - Project Officer, Seychelles Islands Foundation



“The Aldabra Clean-Up Project is a major learning curve for me. Being a co-lead of this international project at 24-25 imbued me with experience in leadership and coordination which has developed my confidence and given me a voice on national and international platforms. Additionally, speaking as a young person, it showed me what happens when youth are given a chance to lead, work together and are supported by a diverse group of partners. At a time in which environmental crises dwarf borders and can seem impossible to tackle, this project proved the value of communication and collaboration. I will make sure to build on these learnings in *whatever I do next.*”

RIVER MAPPING & MONITORING & MANGROVE HABITAT MAPPING PROJECT FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF PRASLIN



Government of Seychelles

SeyCCAT grant
SCR 100 000

Co-financing
SCR 90 500

Description:

This project’s aim is to ensure that the coastal management of the island of Praslin advances sustainable development. To do this, the project enables the Geographic Information System (GIS) officers of the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change (MEECC) to map out water bodies, including river dynamics and mangrove species with greater accuracy to provide a map for the sustainable development of the coastal strip. This map will take into account the natural flow of water bodies on the island as well as monitor the rivers for the safety and well-being of the population. It is expected that the mapped rivers will guide the Planning Authority and the MEECC in approving development applications and assessing their impacts on the environment. Mapping of the mangrove areas will support the country in its conservation and biodiversity efforts, as well as for its planning of Ecosystem-Based Activities in the future. The project aims to be recreated on the main island of Mahé in the future.

To do this, the SeyCCAT grant will be used to purchase a detailed satellite imagery map of the island of Praslin as well as set up river monitoring equipment tools, which are required for a long-term river and mangrove monitoring programme by the community.



Objectives:

Provide the Ministry responsible for Environment, Energy and Climate Change with the tools to ensure effective coastal management of Praslin, Seychelles.

- Address the data gap regarding the link between river levels and rainfall in urban and higher areas.
- Provide data for policymakers to assess the risk of flooding and water flow during dry periods which affect the river ecosystem, people and their property.
- Train the local community to collect data on river levels.
- Map river courses 30 metres above sea level.
- Map mangroves in all the wetlands of Praslin.

Sophie Morgan – Project Manager



“This is my first experience working as a Project Manager. I am the youngest, and only female team member. Being Project Manager has helped develop my leadership skills, to be the kind of leader I want to be: one who is considerate of the needs of their team; who communicates well despite pressure from strict deadlines; who is reliable and approachable; and one who solves problems instead of getting upset or blaming others when things go wrong or not according to plan. What I have learnt and am still learning from this experience will definitely help me in other aspects of my life in the future.”

COMMUNITY-BASED ECOLOGICAL WETLAND REHABILITATION, PASQUIERE, PRASLIN



SeyCCAT grant

SCR 919 442

Co-financing

SCR 965 688

Description:

This project addresses the degradation of critical wetland habitats at Pasquière within the Curieuse Marine National Park. There is a need for rehabilitation and management of degraded but critical coastal habitats (river, freshwater marsh, mangrove, beach crest) in this area by working together with communities, organisations and local government to encourage and ensure local community participation in restoration efforts, as direct involvement may inspire better stewardship and a keener sense of project ownership by local communities.



Objectives:

- To work in partnership with private landowners, government, private sector and other NGOs to restore degraded areas.
- To develop public awareness regarding the dangers of forest fires and land degradation through the media, websites, newsletters, publications, presentations, articles and other means.
- To influence decisions and policies based on sound scientific research and information.
- To raise funds to support the work programme of the Association.
- To set up and manage information databases to assist those engaged in research concerning forest fires, forest conservation and management and land degradation in the Seychelles.



Victorin Laboudallon

“We’ve got the sea rising. You can see places where there used to be houses. Now there are none. There is something on this planet going wrong. If the mangroves are gone, the nation of Seychelles will be gone. Our protection for human life is the mangroves.”

ROADMAP ON BLUE CARBON OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SEYCHELLES



Photo credit: Ameer Ebrahim



SeyCCAT grant
SCR 1 000 000

Co-financing
SCR 930 500

Description:

To advance Seychelles' blue economy, it is imperative to explore Blue Carbon opportunities within the region. Accounting for the ocean's carbon offsetting capacity can help Seychelles remain a net carbon sink and achieve its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). Further, many of the costs of achieving emission reductions in the energy and transport sectors could be met through international climate financing and Blue Carbon Markets.

Blue carbon ecosystems (i.e. mangroves, seagrass beds, saltmarshes) are among earth's most efficient carbon sinks, burying carbon up to 40-times faster than tropical rainforests and locking away carbon in the ground for millennial time scales. In addition to sequestering carbon, blue carbon ecosystems provide other important ecosystem services: they support fisheries, enhance biodiversity, and protect shorelines from erosion, extreme weather events and sea level rise.

This project seeks to explore the Seychelles' Blue Carbon future, by developing a first-pass assessment of potential Blue Carbon opportunities in the Seychelles and building local capacity and literacy on Blue Carbon (through a series of on-site workshops). This project is a necessary and strategic investment into understanding Seychelles' Blue Carbon future, and will feed into a much larger, multi-year series of programmes - 'Seychelles Blue Carbon roadmap' - that will set the framework to establish a Blue Carbon market in Seychelles.



Objectives:

- Create a technical report that reviews and synthesises all of Seychelles' Blue Carbon research.
- Develop a roadmap to determine Blue Carbon opportunities in Seychelles.
- Raise awareness and build Blue Carbon capacity in Seychelles.

COASTAL WETLANDS AND CLIMATE CHANGE



Description:

Seagrasses are flowering plants that have roots, stems, and leaves. Seagrasses bury around 10% of the total organic carbon sequestered in the ocean. In fact, seagrass carbon stocks are comparable to those of temperate and tropical forests, mangroves, and tidal marshes. Seagrasses in Seychelles are perfect carbon sinks, capturing this greenhouse gas from the atmosphere and potentially storing it for hundreds of years. This project aims to better understand the role of seagrass in combating the impacts of climate change. The project will determine the total coverage of seagrass in Seychelles and provide an estimate of the carbon stored in these meadows. Once the baseline amount of carbon stored within seagrass beds is calculated, Seychelles will commit to the sustainable management and protection of seagrass into the country's climate plans. These climate plans will be submitted to the United Nations.

This project aims to better understand their potential role in combating the impacts of climate change. The project will focus on finding out how many seagrass meadows there are in Seychelles and how much carbon dioxide is being absorbed by them. Once we have measured the value of the service, they are providing to address climate change, a commitment for their sustainable management and protection will be integrated into the Seychelles' climate plans. These climate plans will be submitted to the United Nations.

Objectives:

- To determine the seagrass cover in Seychelles and estimate the carbon stored in these seagrass beds,
- Capacity building in seagrass mapping techniques and ground-truthing and any other relevant skills. Women and the youth in particular will be targeted.
- Raising awareness on the environmental value of seagrass habitat among school children, fishermen, the hotel industry and other targeted groups deemed necessary/influential, and the general public.

Wills Agricole – Principal Secretary Department of Energy and Climate Change



“The revision of the NDC for 2020 ties in with growing awareness of the potential for nature-based solutions, particularly the ocean. Thus as a pioneer in ocean leadership, Seychelles will be including coastal wetlands and, more specifically, seagrass within our NDC. This project will allow us to not only map but also measure and manage the carbon sequestration capacity of the Seychelles’ seagrass beds, and the technologies and partnerships that we are building, in regards to mapping of our seagrass ecosystems are at the cutting edge, allowing for local and international partnerships and local capacity building. Through this work, we hope not only to further our own understanding of how best to conserve these precious ecosystems, but, true to our reputation as an ocean pioneer, also share key learnings with the rest of the world.”

Kelly Hoareau – Director, Blue Economy Research Institute



“The SEYCCAT Coastal Wetlands and Climate Change Project State of Knowledge Workshop provided an important opportunity for the University of Seychelles’ James Michel Blue Economy Research Institute (UniSey BERI) to consolidate our goals and capacity with that of the project’s. Having further in-person discussions and site visits with our international colleagues about the local environment and resources needed to achieve the project outputs will lead to much stronger knowledge co-creation. The collaboration between various local partners was also strengthened and this will enable UniSey BERI to support more effective, transdisciplinary research outputs that will be useful and accessible to various stakeholders, from decision-makers to the wider community. We were pleased to be a part of the workshop and look forward to working with this multinational team that will advance our country’s environmental agenda.”

ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION OF THE IMPACT OF THE ARTISANAL FISHERY ON SPECIES OF LOCAL CONCERN



SeyCCAT grant
SCR 563 000

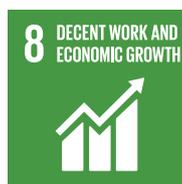
Co-financing
SCR 862 544

Description:

This project seeks primarily to develop pragmatic, targeted co-management measures on 'species of local concern', i.e. the species identified by fishers as being of concern due to declines in catch over the last 20-30 years. In a second instance, the project undertakes the first survey of the artisanal ray fishery by identifying species composition, relative abundance, seasonal occurrence and population demography. The results are compiled into a report that informs and provides recommendations for the National Plan of Action on the Management and Conservation of Sharks (NPOA). Additionally, the monitoring efforts are used to build on the data gathered under the 2017 GEF Satoyama project by doubling the dataset (12 months to 24 months) on the impact of the artisanal fishery on threatened species.

Objectives:

- To collect data on species identified by fishers as being of concern with regard to their status and fishery.
- Present that data to fishers and facilitate the discussion of potential measures to improve their status.
- This project offers a complimentary fisher-driven approach of co-management.



Key successes:

- 3978 fish of local concern recorded and measured in the context of the project.
- Data on all species of local concern landed, i.e. amount caught, size, seasonality, gear used. This was presented to fishermen in three meetings attended by 30 local fishers.
- The project provided one report on the ray fishery which was provided to the Seychelles Fishing Authorities to inform and provide recommendations to the National Plan of Action for the management and conservation of sharks (NPOA).



Trefle Mondon – a retired fisherman

“A lot has changed since I started. In the early days, you would use only 3 traps and you would have a big catch, especially for rabbitfish. Now, it’s not easy – you won’t get fish. You will need 15-20 traps before you get enough fish to sell at the market. Lots of fish are disappearing including sharks, rays and groupers. I am now collaborating with the Green Islands Foundation in our “species of local concern” project because it is clear that this is serious and needed.”

PILOTING VOLUNTARY FISHERIES ZONE CLOSURE ON PRASLIN ISLAND FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT AND FISHER FOLKS



SeyCCAT grant
SCR 877 000

Co-financing
SCR 50 000

Description:

The overall aim of the project is to pilot a voluntary fishery zone closure on Praslin Island for the benefit of the marine environment and fisher folks. The project comes from the recommendations of many fishermen suggesting that the bay of Baie Ste Anne should be closed to trap fishing during the North-West season when the weather is calm for a period of 6 months. The temporary closure should protect fish stocks in the bay and allow fish to become bigger and more numerous and result in higher catches during the South-East season when the area will be re-opened for fishing. The Voluntary Temporary Fisheries Closure was first implemented on 1st November 2019 and will be in place until 30th April 2020. After that the area will be opened and normal trap fishing will continue until 1st November 2020 when the closure will come into force once again. Fish catch inside the closure zone is being scientifically assessed before the closure came into place and after the closure to determine if there has been a significant effect on the total catch and size of fish.



Darrel Green, Chairman of the Praslin Fishers' Association.



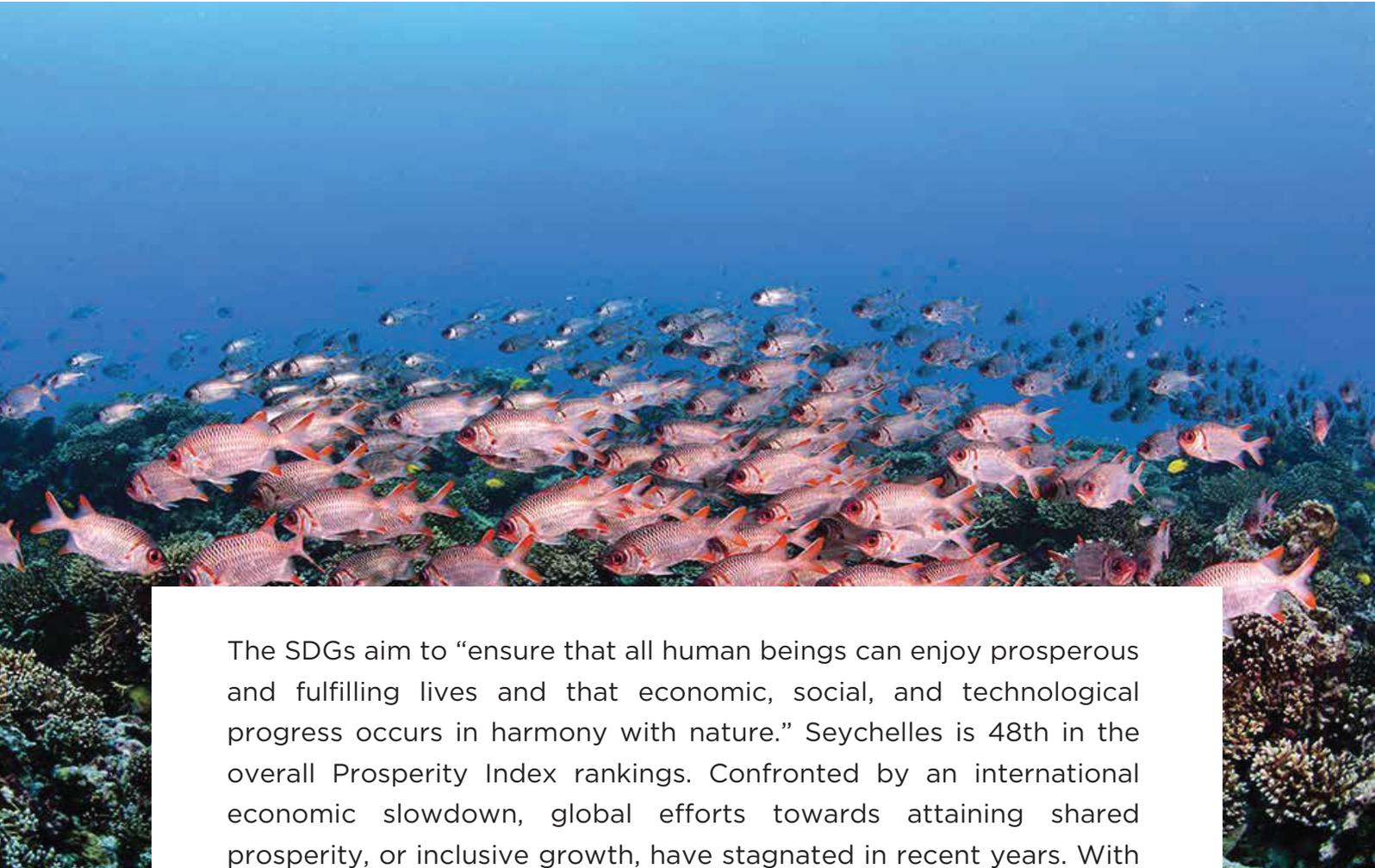
“We came together as fishers, members of the association, non-members of the association and the general public, and decided that we need to find a way to give these fish species a chance to increase in size. Today, we see people bringing small rabbitfish of just 18 centimetres and including it in their packet for sale. This shows a deterioration of stock. During this six-month closure, it will give these fishes an opportunity to mature. We are collecting data before, during and after the closure. It is worth mentioning we record their species and measure their size then release them back into the sea. During our surveys we are seeing that the area of seagrass acts as a nursery for rabbitfish, so these areas need to be closed for a period of time to let the fish grow.”

Learn more about the project via the following video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tG9szwu_leo

Key successes:

- An extensive group of Praslin Fishers, signed, for the first time in Seychelles' history, a fishermen charter to respect the Voluntary Temporary Fisheries Closure Zone and its accompanying commonly agreed rules.
- The project has positively contributed to fisheries co-management in the Seychelles Inner Islands and contributed to the implementation of the “Management Plan for the Demersal Fishery Operating on the Mahé Plateau.
- The project has also benefitted from international media coverage on the BBC.
- An increase in the size and number of fish caught in traps was observed in an area around the main harbour of Praslin, Seychelles' second-most populated island, following a six-month voluntary fisheries closure.
- Before the closure, rabbitfish and parrotfish - the two main targeted species - measured on average between 22 and 24 centimetres and between 24 and 26 centimetres respectively. Data collected at the end of the closure period, show that both species had, on average, increased by six centimetres.

PART 3: PROSPERITY



The SDGs aim to “ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social, and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature.” Seychelles is 48th in the overall Prosperity Index rankings. Confronted by an international economic slowdown, global efforts towards attaining shared prosperity, or inclusive growth, have stagnated in recent years. With prosperity unevenly shared and jobs not equating to decent work, SeyCCAT has strategically invested in the dreams of Seychellois for engaging in quality and rewarding work. SeyCCAT is one of the few philanthropic organisations that provides salaries to project leads and is willing to help you start your own micro-enterprise. By investing in people, we invest in sustainable blue prosperity in Seychelles.

BLUE ECONOMY ENTREPRENEURS CREATING SMART, SUSTAINABLE AND SHARED PROSPERITY THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT AND TRAINING



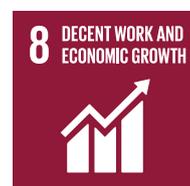
SeyCCAT grant
SCR 596 838

Co-financing
SCR 112 000

Description:

The project conducted a detailed study of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the Seychelles through data collection, interviews and training workshops with key stakeholders such as government, NGOs, private sector organisations and essentially blue economy entrepreneurs in Seychelles. With national emphasis placed on unlocking the potential of the blue economy for diversification, conservation and inclusive prosperity, it is imperative that the entrepreneurial ecosystem of this economy is understood for improved decision making, innovation and sustainable development. It is crucial for stakeholders to understand how blue growth can be created, nurtured, delivered, and added value through the entrepreneurship ecosystem, thus identifying the gaps in the present system and mitigating any perceived risks.

The project additionally seeks to gain a better understanding of entrepreneurs' attitudes towards business in the blue economy which can impact the ecosystem in the long term; how can blue growth be created through economic diversification and added value? Where do current challenges lie within the system? What measures would stakeholders need to take into consideration to successfully ensure the long-term sustainability of both business and ocean sustainability?



Objectives:

The project aims to provide data-based information on the state of the entrepreneurship ecosystem within the blue economy in Seychelles, its perceived challenges and proposed measures to ensure long term economic development in line with oceanic sustainability.

Key successes:

- A total of 48 Seychellois entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs were trained in business ideation.
- A total of 198 completed survey responses were collected, providing a suitable response rate for the analysis of the ecosystem using quantitative methods.
- Awareness raising and public lecture was conducted through the creation of 3 informational videos and leaflets which were distributed to the general public. 2 information sharing sessions were held with government stakeholders and 1 public lecture was held at the University of Seychelles (UniSey).

Key Findings:

- 40% of the participants found administrative and regulatory procedures took a long time to complete. It is recommended that the government improves the speed and ease of bureaucratic actions needed to start a business. This is important, since the blue economy is continually evolving and there will be new opportunities currently not identified. The Seychelles should be ready for this change, and have a regulatory framework in place that will embrace it.
- A lack of creativity and innovation was also cited frequently as a challenge to entrepreneurial drive. It is recommended that there is an increase in awareness of entrepreneurship activity and opportunities in Seychelles.
- 85% of the participants agreed that fear of failure are two main factors that would stop them from starting their own venture. Mentorship is one area that was identified as needing improvement within the Seychellois entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Gender equity:

Eco-Sol Consulting is led by Malshini Senaratne, a young woman, who designed and executed this project. She has been inspired by the findings of the research and is now seeking to pursue a postgraduate doctorate on the topic of the blue economy and gender inclusivity.

Youth-led project:

The training provided during the entrepreneurial workshops had an 'open age' welcome and it was found mostly youth attended the workshop. The Business School ideation workshop also included 23 young students.



Alexandra Arringo - Workshop participant

"The 3DS workshop was a great experience, where I discovered my true identity in the world of entrepreneurship! When I attended the workshop, I was the owner of two clothing shops. But after the workshop, the tables turned around! I now own a private tuition centre offering extra classes to students in need, with the aim of boosting academic grades in the country and in return nurture a better society. My love for teaching slowly grew, and I'm now back at school at 30 years of age. I'm currently studying at SITE for a diploma in teaching. 3DS can really so miracles!"

TGMI BLUE ECONOMY ACCELERATOR PROGRAMME



SeyCCAT grant
SCR 970 000

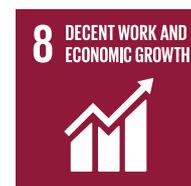
Co-financing
SCR 969 200

Description:

Seychelles' economy is developing at a very rapid rate and the government has made some major decisions over the past few years in regards to the blue economy, sustainable development, and entrepreneurship. There has been little impact of implementation of these initiatives due to a lack of human resource capacity as well as institutional capacity. This accelerator programme will attempt to support a revolution to transform the blue economy business ecosystem with a particular emphasis on the fisheries sector.

Objectives:

- To have at least 20 entrepreneurs that have gone through the accelerator programme with a resulting significant impact on their businesses.
- To have at least 10 new innovative and modern businesses in the area of the blue economy particularly in the fisheries domain, registered and running.



NOU LEKER BLE: LANNEN 2020



SeyCCAT grant
SCR 529 686

Description:

The lack of education and awareness around the environment, especially the marine environment, is one of the major causes of environmental problems as people are not aware of the impacts of their daily activities. Education and awareness around the marine environment is reaching and capturing the attention of a large number of people around the world through films and photography, especially on social media platforms targeting different age groups. In Seychelles, documentation of our marine environment is very limited, with the main reason being the extremely high cost of underwater equipment. The documentary will be in Creole with English subtitles, comprising of different episodes with the aim of educating the public about the ocean, marine species, climate change, marine habitats such as mangroves, threats to the ocean and how human activities affect the ocean e.g. activities on land, water sports, unsustainable fishing practices, plastics pollution and marine conservation work. Télésesel, a local TV platform, has also agreed to showcase the documentary on their platform to reach more people. Other platforms like SBC or probably international platforms in the region may also be reached in due time.



Objectives:

A marine documentary to change people's mindsets and make them more conscious of the state of our environment and switch from unsustainable practices to become more active in marine environment conservation. This marine documentary will have different episodes of about 20-30 minutes long.



Dillys Pouponeau, 26 years old Project Leader

“Thanks to my most recent educational sessions, I realised that media captures people’s attention more than if people had to listen to a talk or read. And feedback from my previous job as a TV presenter for a diving programme showed me that there really are fans of local documentaries, thus I have decided to take it on on a larger scale. Producing this documentary is the perfect opportunity to share my passion of underwater videography/photography while doing something impactful.”

ROUTE TO MARKET



SeyCCAT grant
SCR 98 300

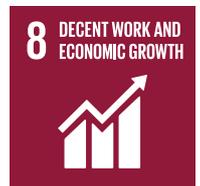


Description:

Shahiid Melanie, 24 year old entrepreneur, of Active Group is scouting a new business opportunity in Seychelles. In a population that consumes on average, 57 kilograms of fish per capita per year, having access to fresh fish is important. However, this is sometimes made challenging because of busy lifestyles and the inconvenience of cleaning fish in modern apartment settings. At the same time, fishers are often left struggling to sell fish into the late hours of the evening, often resulting in significant fish waste. Shahiid believes this is an opportunity to connect consumers and fishers to ensure the sale of their catch.

SeyCCAT's small grant to Shahiid is facilitating a survey and thereafter, the creation of database that will inform a solid business model. The project will enable Shahiid to collect data about fishers and their catch, consumers, their preference of fish and their hours of availability for delivery. The information is being collected through a locally-created mobile app. This project aims to collect data to identify wastage in the route to the market, and help curb over fishing, tackling the sustainability of the fishery sector. By liaising with local stakeholders and getting networks setup between the clients and suppliers within the fishery industry, a direct route to the market will be established so as to deliver fish directly to households and tourism establishments.

It is expected that following this survey, a second phase of the project will be implemented where the infrastructure will be put in place to connect fishers to consumers through an online ordering platform.



Shahiid Melanie – Project Manager

“I always wanted to be an entrepreneur. One evening, I was discussing with a friend and together, we came up with this business idea. After a few months of discussions, we decided to give it a try! We got the perfect opportunity with the SeyCCAT grant. This innovative project will help to have a better understanding of the importance of sustainability in the fisheries sector. On a personal level, it is a very exciting adventure and I am learning a lot from this project and venture.”

PART 4: PARTNERSHIPS



The SDGs call for “a spirit of strengthened global solidarity.” Solidarity is needed, especially when it comes to mobilising financing and reaching the most vulnerable. Governments alone can’t achieve the SDGs, but they have a role to play. Building strong partnerships with diverse entities is a major focus of SeyCCAT.

SeyCCAT’s funds aim to be open and accessible to all Seychellois. We encourage applications from partnerships and consortia that can demonstrate a shared vision and appreciation of inter-organisational competencies required to achieve a successful project. We actively seek to support “creative collaborations.”

Most of the SeyCCAT-funded projects require co-financing. Between 2017 – 2019, the funds leveraged for co-financing have been estimated at more than SCR 19.8 million (approximately, US\$ 1.4 million). The funds come from different stakeholders and institutions in Seychelles and abroad from private companies, NGOs, governments, and universities.

A good example to illustrate this local and international partnership is the marine baseline assessment around Fregate: the project is led by Green Islands Foundation, an NGO registered and based in Seychelles, together with 6 other partners.

A meaningful partnership to undertake a long-term marine monitoring programme.



Creative collaborations, match-funding and leveraging SeyCCAT grants has led to the first 3D mapping of the ocean floor around Fregate Island.

DONORS AND PARTNERS- THANK YOU!

Thank you to the SeyCCAT Board, the Blue Grants Committee and the Finance Committee for supporting us to ensure an impactful trust fund. Our success is thanks to the support of our partners and donors.



Thank you to the generous support of our donors and impact investors:

Calvert Impact Capital, Leonardo Di Caprio Foundation, Lyda Hill Foundation, Oak Foundation, Ocean5, Nuveen, Prudential Financial Inc., the third South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project, The Grantham Foundation, and the Waitt Foundation.

CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED

In this section of the report, we summarised the challenges faced and lessons learned by SeyCCAT since 2017. We will determine what conditions are needed for the trust funds to succeed, what conditions are likely to hinder success and also how to assure the performance of the funds is adequately monitored and evaluated.

1. Challenges:

Administrator with limited resources

Permanent staff of SeyCCAT include the CEO and her Executive Assistant, meaning there are 2 people tasked with the running of this multi-million-dollar trust fund. Partnerships have proven effective to help with this challenge. SeyCCAT recently entered into an agreement with Global Vision International to host virtual interns. SeyCCAT seeks meaningful partnerships with academic institutions, locally and internationally, to assist with environmental and social safeguards monitoring, procurement monitoring, monitoring and evaluation and impact measurement.

Who decides what SeyCCAT funds?

At its inception, SeyCCAT simply selected a strategic objective that would be advertised for requests for proposals and which was open for applicants to apply with any project directly or indirectly linked to this objective. Since 2018, there has been an increase in funds to support strategic objectives 1, 2 and 5 but this also means that funds are limited to support strategic objectives 3 and 4. SeyCCAT seeks more funds to support climate action and coastal and marine ecosystem rehabilitation. We are dependent on the people who apply for SeyCCAT grants and it is their decision as to the type of projects they are willing to implement. SeyCCAT does not have grants by invitation and is therefore reliant on the interest and expertise of local communities to deliver on projects.

Meeting international standards

SeyCCAT manages the proceeds of the debt-swap and the Blue Bond. The Blue Bond is partially guaranteed by the World Bank. The World Bank has introduced additional safeguards to apply to all projects funded by the Blue Bond. These include the fact that all projects must include an environment and social management plan, procurement monitoring and a new donor report for completion. Meeting these standards is both the responsibility of the grantee and SeyCCAT. Capacity-building has sought to address this gap.

Capacity of eligible groups

In the first two years of management of the funds, it became clear that some groups did not find the BGF accessible, such as small-scale fishers and young people. The project application acted as a deterrent or the project design was too complex and failed to meet the set objectives and deliver on the intended impacts. There is, therefore, an urgent need to build capacity around project management, as small associations are tasked with managing large amounts of money and writing elaborate reports. Furthermore, it is clear that many projects are dependent on volunteers or international expertise which can lead to delays in the projects.

2. Lessons Learned:

Meaningful Partnership to support the work of SeyCCAT

Given its need for support, SeyCCAT has established an internship programme in which it hosts both local and international interns for a minimum period of one month. SeyCCAT is now in partnership with Vermont Law School, Arizona State University (School of Sustainability), Global Islands Partnership, and Global Vision International to provide graduates with expertise to support SeyCCAT's work. A key partner of SeyCCAT is the Project Implementation Unit of the third South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Governance and Shared Growth Project which is able to fund key consultants to assist with capacity-building, communications and monitoring and evaluation.

SeyCCAT is supported by international and local partners including philanthropic organisations marine scientific institutions and multilateral banks.

Public Engagement and Capacity Building

In 2019, SeyCCAT saw a record-breaking number of applicants. This is the result of allowing for projects applications to be made in Creole, the targeted communications strategy which included significant engagement with small-scale fishers and partners delivering capacity-building sessions. SeyCCAT's "open-door" policy enabled people to have one-to-one meetings with SeyCCAT personnel for more guidance.

A small group of consultants are now providing coaching and capacity-building sessions to small-scale fishers. The small-scale fishers have made a call for an envelope of funds to be allocated to small-scale fisheries projects following these capacity-building initiatives.

Employing these strategies is the best way to secure the absorption of funds. Once funds are absorbed, it is clear that organisations with good and transparent governance structures and a strong network of partners can deliver on the project including timely reporting. However, some organisations continue to struggle with project management. In 2020, SeyCCAT is hosting a series of capacity-building sessions on themes including project management, financial management, monitoring and evaluation, and communications.

Working with nature

Most SeyCCAT-funded projects include some form of working with the environment, in particularly, the ocean. As such, the design of the project must take into consideration its location, and the timelines based on the monsoons. In addition, given the duration of SeyCCAT-funded projects, there are limits to appreciating the variations in nature as data collection may be for 12 months only.

Donor Reporting

SeyCCAT has the critical role of reporting to donors. The proceeds of all donors are segregated and cannot mix when funding a project. This enables the Trust to report to donors on the exact projects that they have supported, providing enhanced transparency.





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