



GOS-GEF-UNDP

Prioritising Biodiversity Conservation and Nature-based Solutions as Pillars of Seychelles' Blue Economy (Blue Economy Project)

Brief Project Description:

Seychelles is located in the Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands Region, which has been classified as one of the world's "global biodiversity hotspots". The country is a globally important storehouse of marine biodiversity, with some 1,200 fish species recorded, and particularly high levels of faunal diversity and (terrestrial) endemism. Seychelles is implementing an innovative Marine Spatial Planning process to conserve this biodiversity and associated marine and coastal ecosystem services through an expanded MPA system while also exploring ways to grow the country's Blue Economy and provide sustainable economic benefits for its population. However, the country lacks the institutional and financing mechanisms as well as monitoring and enforcement capacities to effectively manage the expanded MPA system, and the experience and technical capacities to develop Nature-based Solutions to sustain its Blue Economy objectives. The proposed project will address these barriers through the following interventions:

Component 1 will address the setting up of the technical and institutional framework to effectively manage the different zones (including 30% of the area as MPAs) that have been designated under the Seychelles' Marine Spatial Plan. **Outcome 1.1: Strengthened strategic, political and institutional framework and capacity to implement Seychelles' MSP and govern the expanded MPA system.**

Component 2: will address the strengthening of traditional MPAs that are under threat, especially from weak enforcement that has resulted in less than optimal performance of these sites in terms of species and habitat conservation. **Outcome 2.1: Expansion and strengthened management of four priority conservation sites**

Component 3 will support Nature-based Solutions to improve tourism management and reduce localized threats in vulnerable coastal and marine ecosystems; identify and pilot ecosystem management and restoration activities in marine protected areas; and enhance opportunities for Seychellois (focusing on women and youth) to engage in sustainable nature-based livelihoods. **Outcome 3.1: Innovative nature-based solutions support livelihoods and sustainable development in 4 sites.**

Component 4 will ensure that effective gender mainstreaming, M&E processes, and knowledge management (including south-south cooperation) are integrated throughout the project activities. **Outcome 4.1: Improved sharing of information among stakeholders and partners to strengthen ownership and management of natural resources.**

Main Project Sites: St Anne Marine National Park, Ile Cocos MNP, Aride Special Reserve, Port Glaud ramsar site

Duration: 72 months (September 2023 – September 2029)

GEF Budget: \$4,955,023

To view main activities, click on this link XXXXXXXX (*uploaded word or pdf document, see below*)

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Outputs & Activities

Component 1 – Strengthening political and institutional framework for effective implementation of Seychelles' Marine Spatial Plan (MSP)	
Outcome 1.1. Strengthened strategic, political and institutional framework and capacity to implement Seychelles' MSP and govern the expanded MPA system	
Outputs	Activities
Output 1.1.1 Institutional, technical and financial capacity of the responsible Oceans Authority developed for effective governance of Seychelles' MSP process and expanded MPA system	Activity 1. A Strategic Plan Expert: Preparation of a 5-year Strategic Plan for the responsible Ocean Authority
	Activity 2. Ocean Governance Expert: Training workshops for responsible Oceans Authority staff in ocean governance and inter-agency coordination for MSP implementation
	Activity 3. Capacity development for responsible Oceans Authority staff (and MSP delegated authorities) in site management plan preparation, monitoring, reporting and review.
	Activity 4. Capacity development for responsible Oceans Authority staff in resource mobilization and budgeting MSP implementation
	Activity 5. Capacity development for responsible Oceans Authority staff (Blue Economy and MACCE Public Education and Community Outreach Division) in designing and implementing public education, stakeholder communication and outreach campaigns
Output 1.1.2 A strategic coordination mechanism for implementation of the Marine Spatial Plan is established	Activity 1. Support and coordinate MSP implementation work of the decision-making bodies and technical working groups.
	Activity 2. Support the development of work plans and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for reporting on MSP implementation by key agencies.
	Activity 3. Set up an online platform for reporting on MSP implementation by key agencies.
Output 1.1.3 Investment Framework and Strategy for financing the expanded MPA system, developed and implemented	Activity 1. Development of a resource mobilisation strategy for financing the expanded MPA system.
Output 1.1.4: Legal / regulatory framework and judicial / law enforcement capacities strengthened to support MSP implementation and effective conservation of coastal and marine areas	Activity 1. Capacity development for legal advisors of MSP implementation agencies in drafting of legislation and policy documents.
	Activity 2. Update of outdated legislation to facilitate implementation of the MSP.
	Activity 3. Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment for any new / amended MPA legislation
	Activity 4. Strengthening the capacity of the Attorney General's Office and the judiciary for dealing with MSP and environment conservation-related crimes.
Output 1.1.5. Capacities of Blue Economy financial services institutions (including Seychelles	Activity 1. Set up a database, appropriate IT system and dashboard to improve the transparency and handling of Blue Grants Fund (BGF) applications, monitoring and evaluation, analysis and information sharing.

Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust and Development Bank of Seychelles) strengthened	Activity 2. Develop the technical capacity of SeyCCAT staff and local consultants in monitoring, assessment and evaluation of projects funded by the BGF.
	Activity 3. Develop the capacity of SeyCCAT staff, government agencies, and local consultants on proposal preparation and fund raising for marine conservation and climate change adaptation.
	Activity 4. Build the capacity of prospective BGF applicants and grantees with the objective of improving the quality of projects submitted and improved implementation of projects.
	Activity 5. Build the capacity of DBS staff and DBS consultants to evaluate projects in the Blue Economy submitted under different loan schemes.
	Activity 6. Improve the ease of doing business with DBS, record keeping and tracking of projects by DBS.
	Activity 7. Undertake a feasibility study to set-up a guarantee scheme for Blue Economy loans.
Output 1.1.6. Capacities developed for the new Biodiversity Finance Unit to support implementation of Seychelles' Biodiversity Finance Plan	Activity 1. Capacity building on identification of biodiversity financing options, resource mobilisation and project proposals preparation.
	Activity 2. Set-up online IT system for reporting of public and private biodiversity and climate change adaptation expenditure and capacity building on system use.
	Activity 3. Update 2024 - 2028 Biodiversity Financing Plan to integrate impacts of the COVID 19 and ensure alignment with the new government strategy for tourism sector and re-structuring of SPGA.
Output 1.1.7 Public understanding and awareness of Seychelles' vision and strategy for the Blue Economy, MSP and MPA system is enhanced	Activity 1. Carry out a Knowledge, Practice, and Awareness survey (or other appropriate methodology) to assess public understanding and awareness of the Seychelles' vision and strategy for the 'Blue Economy', MSP and MPA system.
	Activity 2. Based on the KPA survey, develop and implement an education and awareness strategy on government objectives for development of the blue economy and the designation of the different zones as part of the MSP.
	Activity 3. Establish and use a monitoring protocol to inform further development / revision of the public awareness strategy during project implementation.

Component 2 - Strengthening management effectiveness of Seychelles' Inner Islands MPA system	
Outcome 2.1. Expansion and strengthened management of four priority conservation sites	
Output 2.1.1. Expansion of two MPA sites (Iles Cocos and Port Glaud) and development of regulations and partnership agreements	Activity 1. Expansion of Iles Cocos Marine National Park to include Félicité (from 86 ha to 167 ha).
	Sub-activity 1.1: Habitat and activity mapping and participatory selection of area for expansion.
	Sub-activity 1.2: Preparation of nomination file for expanded MPA.
	Sub-activity 1.3: Development of new regulations for the MNP.
	Sub-activity 1.4: Environmental and Social Impact Assessment for the Expansion of Iles Cocos MNP and related Environmental and Social Management Plans.
	Activity 2. Expansion of Port Glaud Wetland Ramsar site (from 120 ha to 200 ha) and designation as a Zone 2 (sustainable use) Protected Area
Sub-activity 2.1: Participatory selection of area for expansion.	

	Sub-Activity 2.2: Preparation of nomination file for expanded site.
	Sub-activity 2.3: Development of new regulations for the site.
	Sub-activity 2.4: Environmental and Social Impact Assessment for the Expansion of Port Glauf MPA and related Environmental and Social Management Plans.
	Sub-Activity 2.2: Preparation of nomination file for expanded site.
	Sub-activity 2.3: Development of new regulations for the site.
	Sub-activity 2.4: Environmental and Social Impact Assessment for the Expansion of Port Glauf MPA and related Environmental and Social Management Plans.
Output 2.1.2. Strengthening of management at four MPA sites (Iles Cocos, Port Glauf, Aride and Ste Anne) in collaboration with communities and other stakeholders	<p>Activity 1. Management Strengthening of Aride Special Reserve</p> <p>Sub-activity 1.1: Assess population trends and current status of the various seabird nesting populations on Aride, conduct mitigation work, and propose new management measures based on the results.</p> <p>Sub-activity 1.2: Improve field data collection efficiency and reliability in the Aride SNR through the use of the "mobile data" collection tool.</p> <p>Sub-activity 1.3: Review and update of Aride SR park regulations.</p> <p>Sub-activity 1.4: Development and implementation of Aride SR surveillance and enforcement strategies.</p> <p>Activity 2 - Management strengthening of Ste Anne Marine National Park</p> <p>Sub-activity 2.1: Review and update park regulations.</p> <p>Sub-activity 2.2: Support establishment of co-management and/or formal partnership agreements between the SPGA, private hotels, and other relevant permanent residents.</p> <p>Sub-activity 2.3: Acquisition of equipment to support implementation of the surveillance and enforcement strategy</p> <p>Sub-activity 2.4: Implement surveillance and enforcement strategy with support of other agencies</p> <p>Sub-activity 2.5: Capacity building in visitor interaction, monitoring, enforcement, and conservation</p> <p>Sub-activity 2.6. Support implementation of Ste Anne MNP management plan</p> <p>Activity 3 - Management strengthening of Ile Cocos Marine National Park</p> <p>Sub-activity 3.1: Support establishment of co-management and/or formal partnership agreements between the SPGA and private hotels.</p> <p>Sub-activity 3.2: Implement surveillance and enforcement strategy with support of other agencies</p> <p>Sub-activity 3.3: Capacity building in visitor interaction, monitoring, enforcement, and conservation</p> <p>Activity 4 - Management strengthening of the Port Glauf Wetland Ramsar Site and Sustainable Use Protected Area</p> <p>Sub-activity 4.1: Biodiversity inventory and updating of the Ramsar site information sheet.</p> <p>Sub-activity 4.2: Ramsar Country Review.</p>

	Sub-activity 4.3: Training of Wetlands Unit staff, SPGA rangers, L Foundation Seychelles and other MPA staff in developing inventory and reports, and other wetlands management functions.
	Sub-activity 4.4: Habitat monitoring programme with participation of the local community.
	Sub-activity 4.5: Review co-management agreement with local partners for Port Glaud site.
Output 2.1.3. Capacities of MPA management authorities and other agencies to implement monitoring and enforcement programs at MPA sites	Activity 1. Capacity development in general MPA site management, surveillance and enforcement for SPGA and ICS Conservation Officers and rangers.
	Activity 2. Capacity development of MSP enforcement agencies in formulation and execution of enforcement strategies and plans
	Activity 3. Improve coordination among enforcement agencies and clarify existing roles and operational protocols.
	Activity 4. Capacity development of MSP enforcement agencies (SPGA, ICS, Marine Police, NISCC, Coast Guard) in the use of drones and other forms of electronic monitoring for surveillance and evidence gathering.
	Activity 5. Establishment of SPGA Marine National Parks command centre
	Activity 6. Support for SPGA surveillance and enforcement boat patrols
Output 2.1.4. Management Plans and business/financing plans developed/updated and implemented in project sites	Activity 1. Revision of Aride SNR management plan and business plan.
	Activity 2. Revision of Ste Anne MNP management plan
	Activity 3. Drafting of Ile Cocos MNP management plan to include expanded MPA area
	Activity 4. Revision of Port Glaud Ramsar Site management plan.
	Activity 5. Environmental and Social Impact Assessment for updated MPA Management Plans, and related Environmental and Social Management Plans.
	Activity 6: Establishment / operation of an Information System for Protected Land/Seascape Management Plans at MACCE.

Component 3: Investing in innovative nature-based solutions to development	
Outcome 3.1: Integration of adaptation priorities and approaches into national level plans through better informed decision-making supported by improved climate change and vulnerability/adaptation assessments as well as projections for relevant sectors	
Output 3.1.1 Strengthen policy frameworks for implementation of nature-based solutions for tourism	Activity 1. Develop a sustainable tourism policy for Seychelles that supports nature-based solutions, as a cross cutting policy that addresses gaps in existing relevant policies.
	Activity 2. Extend use of the Seychelles Sustainable Tourism Label (SSTL) at selected sites, particularly by small hotels and operators within or in areas adjacent to the selected project sites.
Output 3.1.2: Nature-based solutions for improved tourism management identified and piloted	Activity 1. Promote sustainable and ecologically friendly tourism development at Ste Anne, Port Glaud, and Ile Cocos with an emphasis on minimising land- and sea-based impacts.

in innovative partnerships with private sector and local communities leading to reduced localized threats in vulnerable coastal and marine ecosystems	Activity 2. Reduce pressure on ecosystems from tourism at Ste Anne, Ile Cocos and Port Glaud Ramsar site.
	Activity 3. Strengthen capacities to support nature-based solutions at MPA sites (courses on Coastal Management and Adaptation with modules on NbS; training for planners / authorities in sustainable construction approaches and materials for tourism infrastructure).
3.1.3 Nature-based solutions for ecosystem management / restoration identified and piloted with private sector and local communities leading to recovery of vulnerable coastal and marine ecosystems	Activity 1. Improved management of coastal and marine ecosystems (mangroves, seagrasses and coral reefs) at Port Glaud Ramsar site.
	Activity 2. Rehabilitation of eroded coastal ecosystems and protection of Hawksbill turtle nesting sites at Ste Anne Marine National Park.
	Activity 3. Establish a coral recovery programme at Ile Cocos Marine National Park that strengthens the resilience of reefs through targeted nature-based restoration.
	Activity 4. Management of important seagrass beds in Baie Ste Anne, Praslin.
Output 3.1.4: Communities living adjacent or with access to priority conservation areas benefit from sustainable nature-based livelihoods (with focus on women and youth)	Activity 1. Detailed desk-based analysis of successful NbS to support livelihoods in other SIDS and coastal states, and recommendations for applicable options for the Seychelles.
	Activity 2. Establish and operate an NbS Enterprise Incubator stream within the existing MSME incubator.
	Activity 3. Partner with incubator applicants to design and pilot selected NbS enterprises.
	Activity 4. Carry out SESP related to sustainable nature-based livelihoods, in particular for selected pilot NbS enterprises.
Output 3.1.5 Education and Awareness Raising on NBS and sustainable tourism for the public, private sector and visitors	Activity 1. Campaign in schools on environmental awareness for youth, emphasising marine plastic issues, recycling conservation and tourism, coupled with beach and mangrove clean-up campaigns.
	Activity 2. Awareness raising to the private sector to fully understand the fragility of the ecosystem they bring their staff and clients into (e.g. St Anne; Port Launay, Ile Cocos).
	Activity 3. Raise awareness within Seychelles to 'buy locally' including products developed through NbS incubator.

Component 4 – Effective gender mainstreaming, knowledge management and M&E	
Outcome 4.1: Improved sharing of information among stakeholders and partners to strengthen ownership and management of natural resources.	
Output 4.1.1 Gender empowerment strategy developed and used to guide project implementation, M&E at pilot sites	Activity 1. Develop project Gender Empowerment Strategy
	Activity 2. Mainstream gender across project components

	Activity 3. Carry out Gender Impact Assessments
Output 4.1.2 Participatory M&E and learning framework developed and implemented at pilot sites	Activity 1. Promote sustainable and ecologically friendly tourism development at Ste Anne, Port Glaud, and Ile Cocos with an emphasis on minimising land- and sea-based impacts.
	Activity 2. Reduce pressure on ecosystems from tourism at Ste Anne, Ile Cocos and Port Glaud Ramsar site.
	Activity 3. Strengthen capacities to support nature-based solutions at MPA sites (courses on Coastal Management and Adaptation with modules on NbS; training for planners / authorities in sustainable construction approaches and materials for tourism infrastructure).
	Activity 4. Project External Evaluations (Mid Term Review and Terminal Evaluation)
Output 4.1.3 Lessons learned through participatory M&E and gender empowerment are used nationally and shared internationally	Activity 1. Create and share knowledge products, including technical, policy and planning products developed under Components 1-3
	Activity 2. Produce and disseminate rapid assessments and policy briefs
	Activity 3. Disseminate selected project findings and results through media, scientific publications and on-line tools.
	Activity 4. Establish platforms and networks to bring together existing stakeholder associations and groups where lessons learned and experiences can be shared
	Activity 5. Build local communities of practice on Nature based Solutions
	Activity 6. Share information with global partners on NbS approaches
Output 4.1.4 South-South cooperation on 'Blue Economy' with Indian Ocean countries and other SIDS	Activity 1. Disseminate information on key aspects of the project's Blue Economy approaches with other Indian Ocean countries / SIDS
	Activity 2. Participate in regional / global meetings on Blue Economy and conservation / management of the marine environment