



June-July, 2009

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

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

News/Announcements

“Heads Above Water” - Earth Report on BBC World News, 25-30 September, 2009

We are pleased to inform you that the filming and production work by TVE for the BBC Earth Programme on Mangroves and environmental change (and how coastal communities are coping with these challenges) commissioned by MFF has been completed. The piece is filmed in the Mekong Delta, Viet Nam and the North Coast of Central Java. The film will be aired on BBC World News between **25-30 September** (See media section).

Seychelles’ NCB gets a national Coordinator for MFF



MFF is pleased to announce **Lyndy Bastienne**, NCB Coordinator and Communications Focal Point for MFF Seychelles. Lyndy has been involved in Environmental Conservation Education for the past 7 years including, with the Ministry of Education, the National Focal person for Disaster Reduction Education for the Ministry of Education under the UNISDR Project, as well as Coordinator of Education, Advocacy and Membership for a local NGO. She is also the coordinator for the Wildlife Clubs of Seychelles and the youth environmental education network of school-based clubs and community youth groups. Please join us in welcoming her to MFF. She can be contacted at: lyndy.bastienne@iucn.org.

Thai MFF NCB Celebrates two years!

The Thai NCB, chaired by the DG of the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR), has been successfully coordinating and implementing the MFF initiative in Thailand and networking MFF with other programmes at national level for two years. The Thai NCB will continue to promote ecosystem conservation and management for livelihood security of coastal communities in Thailand. *The NCB would like to extend special thanks to the DMCR for its strong support to MFF; to UNDP Thailand Office for managing the Small Grant Facility (SGF), and the IUCN Thailand Programme and NCB consultant Mr. Tim Greenhow for their invaluable guidance.*

Join a growing regional group of certified Marine Protected Area (MPA) Professionals in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO-COMPAS)

WIO-COMPAS is a certificate programme in the Western Indian Ocean Region endorsed by IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas which promotes good practices in MPA management and encourages professional growth by identifying skills, performance and ethical standards of those managing MPAs. Candidates for certification must demonstrate competence through a portfolio based on case studies, field exercises and interviews. The certifying bodies are WIOMSA (Western Indian Ocean Marine Association) and University of Rhode Island, Coastal Resource Center. To find out more, please visit: www.wio-compas.org.

Recent Events

**MFF’s Fifth Regional Steering Committee meeting
6-9 July, 2009, Berjaya Resort, Mahé, Seychelles**

MFF held its fifth Regional Steering Committee (RSC-5) meeting in the Seychelles on Mahé, the main Island. This represented a major landmark for MFF. MFF institutional partners and country representatives, who together with special invited experts joined hands to plan and decide on the future of MFF. Ten countries, including representatives from Kenya and Tanzania -two countries which recently requested to participate in the MFF initiative, and all MFF institutional partners, as well as the main donors were present. The meeting was opened by Mr Didier Dogley, Principal Secretary, Department of Environment, Seychelles. Mr Dogley made special reference to the December 2004 Tsunami and stressed that healthy and well-managed marine and coastal ecosystems are the resilient environments which can best adapt to the impact of major disasters.



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MFF delegates visits the Ramsar site – Port Launay, Seychelles

During the RSC-5 meeting, MFF Delegates had the opportunity to visit one of the protected wetlands areas on Mahé, Island, Port Launay (PL) wetland which was declared a Ramsar site in 2005. It is one of the largest wetlands in the Seychelles where all seven of the mangrove species in Seychelles are found. This was also an opportunity to showcase Seychelles' achievements in wetland conservation and management and how the Seychelles is promoting sustainable use of Wetlands for the benefit of communities, developers and the Government.

The PL wetland faces many challenges, natural as well as human induced. Two of the major challenges include climate change effects and development impacts such as increasing pressure from new hotel establishments, threatening the wetland's overall beauty and its important status as an internationally recognised conservation area. One proposal is to develop eco-tourism in this area, with the building of a board walk inside the marsh, from which guided tours could be organised for visitors who want to learn more about its eco-system. A government priority is to enforce regulations through the Department of Environment to ensure that any developments near a water body are thoroughly monitored by the EIA Section. A study or evaluation of an area is conducted prior to any project development, before permission is given. For more information please contact **Jean Claude Labrosse, Wetlands Unit, Department of Environment, Seychelles** at: j.labrosse@env.gov.sc.

Sealevel on the rise



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“Safe Islands”

Low-lying islands are threatened by sea level rise caused by a changing climate. The Maldives and Seychelles and other Island States alike are acutely vulnerable to climate change. *“The magnitude of the impact is significantly reduced if appropriate sustainable principals are in place....Some islands in the Maldives may disappear but others will survive if wise decisions are taken now and there is strong international commitment, but we still need to change the way we are doing things”* said **Dr Rolph Payet**, Special Adviser to the President of Seychelles and CEO and Founder of the Sea Level Rise Foundation

(www.sealevel-rise.org) launched by the President of Seychelles, **H.E. Mr. James Michel**, at the First Global Island Partnership Strategy Meeting in Rome, 2007. The Maldives has already embarked on a number of activities to increase the resilience of communities such as the creation of elevated “safe islands” with vegetated bund.

PROJECTS

MFF and Banyan Star Wildlife Club kick starts ‘Mangroves Are a Must’ in the Seychelles

A workshop to launch activities under the MFF Initiative was carried out by the Banyan Star WC to introduce students, staff and some community members to the MFF Small Grant Facility and to find out how they could be involved in the implementation of the ‘Mangroves Are a Must’ project at the community level. The aim of the workshop was to build and share knowledge about coastal issues; provide suggestions for follow up activities; and to enhance the understanding of MFF’s and WCS’ work. The workshop also included observations in the surrounding wetland and coastal areas followed by a brainstorm on how to improve wetland areas by designing an action plan with a set of achievable targets that relevant partners will be involved in activities to improve community participation in conservation. The Banyan Star WC now serves as an inspiration for the five other coastal pilot teams, who are also in the process of defining their action plans to effectively implement this WCS initiated project through the MFF, within their respective communities.



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First MFF Small Grant Facility in the Seychelles kicks off!

The RSC-5 participants also got a chance to visit one of the first SGF in the Seychelles namely a turtle conservation monitoring and awareness raising project financed by the Banyan Tree group and implemented by the Marine Conservation Society for the Seychelles. The MFF SGF will be used to expand the monitoring to neighbouring nesting beaches and to raise awareness about turtles and the need to protect them.

MFF contributes to Indian Ocean Turtle Monitoring and Photo ID Programme!



Interview with Elke Talhma, Research Officer, MCSS (Marine Conservation Society Seychelles)

The MCSS carries out turtle and whale monitoring. Our main focus is on turtles. There are four species of turtles in the Seychelles; loggerhead, green turtle, hawksbill and leather back turtles but only hawksbill and the green turtle nest in the Seychelles. The hawksbill is listed as critically endangered and the Seychelles have the fifth largest population of hawksbill 475 to 575 females. The green turtle is listed as endangered and the Seychelles has the sixth largest population 1000-2000 nesting females in the Seychelles. The hawksbill turtle tends to nest in the inner islands while the green turtle females nests in the outer islands. We carry out turtle monitoring to identify remaining

nesting sites and carry out on-going turtle monitoring to determine change over time. Currently we do not have enough data to determine whether the population is increasing or decreasing. The problem with turtles is that they do not nest every year. A turtle nesting this year may not come back for another two to three years or even seven years. So we need long-term monitoring data to determine whether the population is declining or increasing. With the MFF SGF we will be able to continue the on-going monitoring and expand to the other areas in the inner islands and to involve the local communities living and working near nesting sites by participating through report sitings of turtles and whether or not the turtle is tagged. This will also be coupled with other awareness raising activities.



New tools are made available for children to discover the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Aldabra



Fourteen children benefited this year from a unique and exciting learning opportunity provided under a MFF funded initiative. Seychelles runs an annual Eco-School competition for which the main prize is the opportunity to visit the remote Aldabra Atoll, a wonderful UNESCO World Heritage Site. Aldabra is quite different in character from the main granite islands of Seychelles where the children live. It is a raised atoll of weathered coral limestone and has a huge lagoon with four major passes through which the sea streams back and forth as the tide rises and falls. Around 100,000 Aldabra giant tortoises roam the islands, along with the flightless Aldabra rail and many other animals. It is mostly scrubby and open country but thick mangrove forest fringes the lagoon,

where thousands of frigate birds and red-footed boobies nest. The protected lagoon and the outer coral reef are homes to a multitude of sea creatures, including turtles and even dugongs. These are the ecosystems the children explore on their week long visit, guided and accompanied by rangers and staff. Fun learning activities, part of a toolkit developed by a specially formed Aldabra Children's Book Group as part of a MFF/SIF sponsored project, enabled the children to learn in a more focused way and to apply their field observations, with indoor games such as the "Mangrove Card Game" and the "Life on Aldabra board game", and through outdoor activities such as the "Aldabra Scavenger Hunt" and "Frigates and Boobies".

More MFF Large Projects!

Five new large projects were approved at the recent MFF Regional Steering Committee meeting.

- *Alternative Livelihood options for vulnerable mangrove resource users in the Sundarban Tiger Reserve, West Bengal.* Proposed by Sundarban Biosphere Reserve of the Department of Forest, Government of West Bengal.
- *Increasing the resilience of coastal and riverine communities to climate change and other threats, by conserving the ecosystem services of the Maha Oya and associated coastal wetlands in Sri Lanka.* Proposed by: Environmental Foundation Ltd (EFL)
- *Promoting community participation in integrated coastal management in the North Western Province of Sri Lanka.* Proposed by Sri Lanka Nature Forum (SLNF)
- *Evaluating and improving the management effectiveness of Thailand's Marine and Coastal Protected Areas.* Proposed by: Thailand's Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP)
- *Ecosystem-based Integrated Coastal Resources Management through Multi-Stakeholder participation in Southern Thailand.* Proposed by: Sustainable Development Foundation (SDF)

Capacity Building



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“Mangrove Rehabilitation Lesson Learn from Nakorn Sri Thammarat Workshop” 15-16 June 2009

The MFF Thailand NCB and SEI (Stockholm Environment Institute) co-organized a workshop on mangrove rehabilitation at the Twin Lotus hotel, Nakorn Sri Thammarat Southern Thailand. 70 government agency, academia, communities and NGO representatives both from Nakorn Sri Thammarat and the Gulf of Thailand shared and discussed their experience on mangrove rehabilitation.

Towards safer coasts – Coastal managers trained in DRR and integrated coastal zone management, Magelang, Indonesia, 13-17 July and Chennai, India, 20-24 July

UNEP, in collaboration with national institutes, experts and decision-makers from relevant ministries and MFF National Coordinating Bodies (NCBs), trained 18 mid level coastal managers from Java (Indonesia) and 30 decision-makers and private sector representatives from all Indian coastal states, including Andaman and Nicobar islands under an ISDR and EC funded project. Through traditional methods and hands on practical field exercises, the participants learned about hazards, vulnerability and risk assessments, ecosystems services in coastal protection, the integration of DRR into coastal zone management and the linkages between DRR and climate change. Concept notes to address issues related to coastal management and disaster risk reduction in the participants' states/district were prepared using MFF large project proposals guidelines. The events were very well received and both India and Indonesia are planning to replicate the training in different states/districts.



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Community representatives from Peam Krasop, Cambodia visits the Andaman Coast and Gulf of Thailand, 1-8 June, 2009

11 Representatives from two communities in the Ramsar Site Peam Krasop visited the Andaman coast and the Gulf of Thailand to look at various projects in the coastal zones. Projects included mangrove restoration, ecotourism, and conserve education programmes. Delegates included representatives from savings groups, members of village committee, fishers, deputy super intendent, district environmental office together with Kong Kim Sreng, IUCN Livelihood and Landscape Strategy Coordinator, Robert Maher, IUCN Country Group Head, and a Field Officer. *Right:* Peam Krasop Wildlife Sanctuary, established in 1993. The wildlife sanctuary is located on the Cambodian coast in the Koh Kong Province, near the border with Thailand. **Area:** 238km². **Wildlife:** Irawaddy Dolphin, Humpback Dolphin, Shark, Water Bird, Wader, Tern, Gull, Nordmann's Greenshank, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Bar-tailed Godwit, Mongolian Sandplover, Greenshank and Grey Plover.



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Small Grant Stakeholder Workshop 17-18 June, 2009 in Phuket, Thailand

UNDP on behalf of NCB Thailand held a workshop to help project proponents write proposals by applying the MFF small grant guidelines. As a result, the participants submitted nine SGF proposals by the end of June, 2009.

Stories from the field

MFF and partners help focus attention on the Ranong Biosphere Reserve, Thailand

Working closely with the Provincial and Tambon authorities in Ranong, the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) and various non governmental organisations, an MFF team is helping to prepare a status report on both the natural resources and socio-economy of the Ranong Biosphere Reserve (RBR) area. The RBR was established in 1997 by UNESCO and the Government of Thailand. It covers an area of more than 30, 000 hectares of coastal and marine habitat, dominated by mangroves. The fisher communities living in and around the reserve are heavily dependent on the mangroves and marine resources of the RBR.



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The study will help identify ways by which, MFF, DMCR and local stakeholders may be able to activate the local community income generating function of the RBR, and strengthen its educational, research and monitoring functions.

The MFF team is coordinated by Mr Sompoch Nimsantijaroen, a local coastal and marine expert based in Ranong. The team includes two university students, Miss Sukanya Phetpang from Prince of Songkhla University and Miss Amy Robinson, who is studying for the MSc in Biodiversity and Conservation at Naresuan University in Phitsanulok. The team's work is funded jointly by MFF and the Centre for Tropical Coastal Ecosystems, University of Aarhus, Denmark.



Sompoch



Sukanya

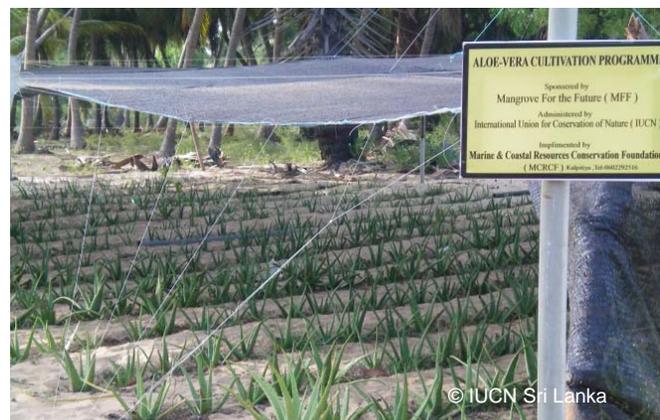


Amy

Empowering women in fisher families through *Aloe vera* cultivation in the Puttalam lagoon, Sri Lanka

Aloe vera is a popular houseplant with a long history as a multipurpose species, providing both medicines and drinks for centuries. The plant has an interesting form and succulence. The succulence helps it to thrive under low moisture conditions. *Aloe vera* is used mainly for two products: gel and latex. *Aloe vera* gel comes from the mucilage in the inner leaf tissues, whilst the latex, commonly referred to as "aloe juice," is a bitter yellow exudate from the tubules just beneath the outer skin of the leaves. The gel is the basis for soaps, body lotions, skin-care products, foot creams and many modern cosmetics. The gel is also reported to contain antiseptic properties. The latex is a well known laxative. In the recent times, the demand for *Aloe vera* products has increased both locally and internationally.

Under the MFF SGF, IUCN Sri Lanka Office provided a small grant to the Marine and Coastal Resources Conservation Foundation (MCRCF) to introduce *Aloe vera* cultivation in selected areas of the Puttalam lagoon as a supplementary livelihood for women in fisher families. MCRCF provided planting material, shade netting, technical supervision and training for homestead cultivation of *Aloe vera*, and also introduced a buy-back system. Fifteen selected women were engaged in this activity, and planting commenced in February, 2009. The first harvest of 406.5 kg in June, 2009 was sold to a leading cosmetics production company in Sri Lanka, at Rs 55/= per kg. Whilst the beneficiaries have received considerable additional income from this activity, the company has placed forward orders which will enable the beneficiaries to continue cultivation with an assured additional income in the coming months. With the successful completion of the project, a second grant was awarded to MCRCF to expand this venture.



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Introducing seaweed (*Eucheuma denticulatum*) culture to fishermen in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka

Seaweeds are cultivated for extraction of carrageenans, which are polysaccharide gels used in confectionery and in a variety of other industries. South-east Asia is one of the largest producers of carrageenans through extensive cultivation of marine algae. Demand for carrageenan is steadily rising. In Sri Lanka, many confectionery manufacturers are interested in acquiring carrageenan locally, and the demand is expected to increase regularly. Currently, there is no organised seaweed cultivation in Sri Lanka.



The Sewa Lanka Foundation received a Small Grant Facility (SGF) to start a pilot sea weed culture initiative.

This is a novel project, as sea weed culture is not known well in Sri Lanka. The seaweed *Eucheuma denticulatum* is now being cultivated in cages in the seas off Panama and Pottuvil in the east coast of Sri Lanka. The Sewa Lanka Foundation works in collaboration with two fisher societies, namely, the Abeysinghapura-Panama Fisheries Cooperative Society and the United Deep Sea Fisheries Cooperative Society. Six fishermen chosen by the Societies have been provided with 60 cages (each 2 m x 1.25 m x 0.5 m) and sea weed 'seeds' together with technical assistance.

The initial results are very promising with the sea weed growing profusely. The additional income from sea weed culture to the fisher families will uplift the living

standards of the coastal fishing community; at the same time, the project will help to transfer new aquaculture technology to the beneficiaries. For more information, please contact: kum@iucnsl.org.



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Upcoming Events

The Fifth Global Clinton Initiative (CGI), Annual Meeting, 22-25 September, 2009 New York

The CGI Annual Meeting is a venue where business, government and civil sector and NGO Directors come together and commits to actions to address global economic and social challenges in the areas of education, energy and climate change, global health and poverty. MFF is a longstanding member of the CGI and took part in and the Annual meeting exchange in 2007 and 2008. Expanding on the success of the Annual Meetings, CGI is now reaching even more leaders in diverse regions, future leaders, and global citizens through new meetings and projects—such as CGI Asia that focuses on taking action.



UN FCCC Climate Talks in Bangkok, 28 September to 9 October 2009

The **Ninth session of the AWG-KP and seventh session of the AWG-LCA** will take place at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC) of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Rajdamnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok, 10200 Thailand (<http://unfccc.int/>).



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Heads Above Water, 6th October at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand (FCct).

MFF invites partners and friends to a special screening of *Heads Above Water*, MFF commissioned Earth Report Programme on Mangroves and coastal challenges and how governments and coastal communities are coping with environmental change in coastal areas, at the Foreign Correspondent's Club Thailand (FCct) at **19.00 on Tuesday October 6th**.

Left: Mangrove forest ward in the Mekong Delta.

PEMSEA International Conference of the EAS Congress 2009- 23-26 November, 2009
"Partnerships at Work: Local Implementation and Good Practices"



The East Asian Region Prepare Declaration on ICM and Climate Change

The East Asian Seas Region Ministerial Forum, to be held in Manila on **26-27 November 2009** following the EAS Congress, 23-26 November to be hosted by Philippine Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and will address climate change adaptation through integrated coastal management (ICM). There is an urgent need for countries to systematically adapt to, the almost inevitable scenarios of rising sea levels and unpredictable weather patterns. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 4th Assessment Reports refers to ICM as the most appropriate process to deal with climate change, sea level rise and other current and long-term coastal challenges.

The Ministerial Forum will discuss how ICM can be systematically applied in addressing adaptation to climate change. They will also discuss the formulation of a policy and endorsing a regional action agenda for scaling up ICM programmes as an on-the-ground approach to climate change adaptation, particularly among local governments of the region.

Government and Civil Society Collaboration on Integrated Coastal Management in the Indian Ocean Region workshop, 26 November, 2009

Multiple agencies are working on various aspects of integrated coastal management (ICM) in the Indian Ocean region. These agencies' programmes and projects reflect their individual institutional mandates and at the same time address similar issues. MFF conducted a rapid assessment of the programmes of institutions working in the field of ICM in the region to survey: the intersections of the programmes of these institutions; the degree to which these institutions are collaborating with each other; and the degree to which they are cooperating with civil society. MFF is convening a workshop to present the findings of the assessment and engage participants in discussing them, with the aim of securing concrete published recommendations for action. For more information and to find out how you can participate, please send an email to: secretariat@mangrovesforthefuture.org.

For more information on the EAS Congress, contact the Secretariat at congress@pemsea.org or eascongress@gmail.com or visit www.pemsea.org/eascongress

Media

Heads Above Water - Earth Report, BBC World News

Watch the MFF commissioned Earth Report Programme "Heads Above Water" on Mangroves and Climate change on BBC World News. The film will be aired on BBC World at the following dates (times are GMT):

- 25 September, **19.30** (except Middle East)
- 26 September, **04.30**
- 28 September, **12.30** (Asia Pacific only)
- 29 September, **15.30**
- 30 September, **01.30** (except Asia Pacific, Middle East and South Asia)



MFF on Seychelles National TV

The MFF Fifth regional steering committee meeting evoked significant interest by the national media. On-line and printed media as well as TV and Radio covered the event making full use of the technical experts and country representatives present. *Left: Denis Matatiken, NCB Chair, Mangroves for the Future, Seychelles being interviewed by SNB, National TV.* [Click here](#) to watch the programme!

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Maldives sends a strong message to Copenhagen!

President of the Maldives, Mohamed "Anni" NASHEED spoke to the world as we countdown to the climate change talks in Copenhagen in December: *"Please don't be stupid"*. The message was sent during the premiere of the *"Age of Stupid"*, an environmental film set in the devastated future world of 2055 that asks the question, "Why didn't we stop climate change when we had the chance?" Watch it on [YouTube!](#)

Listen to an interview by Ari Daniel Shapiro on Indonesia's mangroves:

<http://www.theworld.org/2009/08/04/restoring-indonesias-mangroves/>

New Publication

Adapting to Coastal Climate Change: A Guidebook for Development Planners provides a detailed treatment of climate concerns and adaptation options in coastal areas. The new Guidebook will assist practitioners and development partners to understand the diversity of climate change impacts expected to affect coastal zones in the developing world, and the options that exist for coastal planners and manager to assist coastal communities worldwide to begin to adapt to these impacts. The document is both a tool itself and a link to other resources valuable for assessing vulnerability, developing and implementing adaptation, and integrating options into programs, plans, and projects. The Guidebook is now available at: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/water/news_announcements/coastal_climate_change_report.html

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

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

e-news@mangrovesforthefuture.org.

About MFF

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

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

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