

UNION OF COMOROS

Unity - Solidarity - Development

**VICE PRESIDENCY IN CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF
PRODUCTION, ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY, INDUSTRY AND
CRAFTS**

ASCLME Project



IDENTIFICATION OF CAPACITY BUILDING NEEDS

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STUDY ON CAPACITY BUILDING

Study Context

The Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystems (ASCLME) Project is part of a multi-agency project (Programme for the Agulhas and Somali Current LMEs) to institutionalize adaptive and cooperative management of these LMEs. A phased approach is planned that gradually builds the knowledge base and strengthens the technical and management capacity at the regional level to address transboundary environmental issues within the LME, build political will to undertake activities to reduce threats and finances activities in proportion with management needs. In addition to the ASCLME Project, the program consists of two additional parallel projects, one dealing with land-based sources of pollution (WIO-LaB, implemented by UNEP), and one that develops knowledge for the purposes of industrial fisheries management (SWIOFP, implemented by the World Bank).

Activities within the ASCLME Project focus on filling important inshore and offshore data and information gaps for these LMEs by capturing critical information about the dynamics of ocean-atmosphere interactions and other processes which define the LME, with key data on artisanal fisheries, larval transport and nursery areas along the coast. The overall objective of this information gathering will be to provide national Marine Ecosystem Diagnostic Analyses (MEDAS) that feed a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) and a Strategic Action Programme (SAP).

A major outcome of this program will be capacity building and training (CB&T) to support long-term monitoring of the LME and management processes. It is necessary to identify the institutions, programs and requirements for human capacity building and for these to be addressed through training initiatives. The CB&T specialist (consultant) must undertake a review of national and regional training and capacity building initiatives, identify critical gaps, and assist the CB and the national coordinator of technology in production of a project, [as part of a] comprehensive regional work plan. The consultant

will be responsible as the CB&T national coordinator, the national focal institution, and the Project Coordination Unit.

II. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to gather all the information [required] to develop a training project, based on the results of a survey of current and planned national and regional training initiatives and capacity building needs. Identify major gaps and propose projects to start training (priorities) and activities including a work plan and budget.

The following tasks will be undertaken:

- Collection of all relevant information.
- Develop a training project.
- Incorporation of key elements in the Marine Ecosystem Diagnostic Analysis (MEDA).
- Identify key gaps (priorities) and develop proposals for key training activities, including work plans and budgets
- Participate in key meetings and present the main conclusions.
- Assist in the building of national capacity and the training coordinator as required

III. PROBLEMS SPECIFIC TO COMOROS

The coastal and marine areas are threatened by erosion and removal of materials for construction, pollution from non-degradable and non-recyclable waste. The islands, shoals and coral reefs are threatened by habitat destruction through unsustainable traditional exploitation methods. The high fishing pressure on the coastal reef, global warming and sedimentation driven by erosion due to deforestation. Seagrass beds that form the staple food of sea turtles are threatened by depletion of oxygen in water caused by reef destruction and the increase in temperature. Threats to the infralittoral habitat include pollution from household waste, wastewater, traditional methods of catching fish (dynamite, Tephrosia)

Biodiversity of coastal environments is also threatened by human actions that can be summarized as follows:

- Extraction of sand and coral for construction with consequences [including] the disappearance of several beaches and the migration of fish.
- Pollution due to urbanization of coastal areas (urban waste, oil spills ...)
- Heavy rains cause a significant transport of waste to the coast
- The exploitation of mangroves for construction needs and charcoal-making
- Anarchic and uncontrolled urbanization in coastal areas

3.1 Impacts on environmental degradation

Actions that lead to environmental degradation are largely responsible for the depletion of natural heritage which has an impact on poverty: fisheries, agriculture, water, tourism and infrastructure.

Households with very low disposable income are the most vulnerable and most at risk.

According to information gathered by the IOC regional environment project (1995-2000), tourists are interested by, in order of priority (i) the beach, (ii) swimming, (iii) SCUBA diving and (iv) the forest.

And yet it is all of these ecosystems that receive the most damage.

Degradation of the coastal marine environment has implications for the quality of beaches, the beauty of the seabed (disappearance of coral, fish, molluscs and crustaceans).

Floods, increasingly common in recent years, are indisputably the result of rampant deforestation in the islands. The loss of soil from vegetation root systems make them vulnerable to erosion during heavy rains. The damage caused by heavy rain washes away houses and whole plantations.

Consequently, the damage caused by flooding further impoverishes the poorest.

These floods effect far more than just the natural environment; they also affect extremely expensive investments such as roads, bridges and agricultural structures, drastically reducing [the return on] investment in development efforts.

3.2 PROBLEMS OF LACK OF CAPACITY AND THE URGENCY FOR CAPACITY-BUILDING

The institutions in charge of the environment are severely lacking in human, financial and technical resources and by the absence of regulations defining the mandates, missions and responsibilities of various institutions which are of the islands or of the Union of Comoros.

There is a mismatch between human resources provided for by organisational structures and those needed to carry out tasks assigned to institutions. The financial means to undertake and operate Directorates are nonexistent. Therefore, these directorates are no longer able to perform the tasks assigned to them.

Management and environmental protection requires the involvement of all stakeholders. Thus, the participatory approach was recommended in the development of the National Environment Policy (NEP) in 1993.

We must also recognize that the environment is a cross-cutting field. It covers a range of ministerial departments ranging from agriculture to health through tourism and energy ... etc. These entities must integrate environmental concerns into the design of their sectoral policies.

Associations and grassroots organisations, despite their commitment to environmental protection, are inexperienced. As is the scientific community. The latter is very small and does not benefit from research sharing networks and regional support that would enhance understanding of issues related to biodiversity, climate change and land [soil] degradation.

Without intervention, the situation is likely to be exacerbated in the coming years due to increasing population pressure. The scarcity of arable land and the social and economic problems will worsen.

In the absence of other opportunities, as a matter of survival, people will continue to:

- Occupy ecologically sensitive land
- Clear catchments [of vegetation]
- Put pressure on endangered species
- Extract sand and coral

The consequences of these practices contribute in the short and medium term to a crisis situation which will result in an exponential growth of poverty.

The lack of national capacity for environmental management leads the country to [rely on] external support that results in:

- Lack of awareness about the fragility of resources, reducing the possibility to anticipate problems before they arise
- Reducing the country's capacity to take charge of the management of its natural resources and its development potential
- The imposition of undue costs in terms of financial resources and time to mobilize external support, preventing the country from reacting independently in addressing its environmental problems
- The risk of withdrawal of the country from meeting its responsibility to safeguard biodiversity.

WEAKNESSES, GAPS AND CONSTRAINTS

4.1. The Policy Framework

The policy framework is a weak link in the implementation of several conventions including the National Environmental Policy, Strategy and Action Plan for the conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity, national action plan for adaptation to Climate Change and the National Action Plan to fight against desertification.

All these plans were never revised to adapt to new circumstances and new developments.

4.2 The Legal Framework,

With the apparent unwillingness of the authorities and some carelessness around environmental issues, reviewing and drafting texts has always been a difficult problem to overcome without the support of international experts.

The cumbersome process of reviewing these texts can possibly justify this attitude in the sense that the legislative structures do not have enough qualified human resources to conduct such work.

4.3 The Regulatory Framework

It was found that many laws regulating the environment have never been developed. Other were never ratified where they have been developed. For example, the illegal logging situation is the embodiment of this attitude.

The implementation of legal texts is often hampered by lack of proper identification of the [responsible entity]. The legal texts should not leave room for interpretation. The laws are designed and adopted regardless of the means for their implementation.

4.4 The Economic Framework

The principle of sustainable development requires compromises between people (whose first concern is the immediate survival of their families) and the future. The current situation of the Comorian population puts the daily burden on natural resources in the fight against gaping poverty, [they are] not concerned about disasters and major impacts over which they have no control.

4.5 Coordination of actions

The country has no structure which brings together government agencies, associations, NGOs and the municipalities that are involved in environmental management to ensure systematic and sustainable development.

The lack of transparency and consensus justifies the delay, which [as a consequence loses indispensable leadership].

4.6 The institutions in charge of the Environment (Ministries)

The lack of communication and information exchange between departments responsible for implementing the recommended measures is a major handicap.

There is no institutionalized service that handles the communication and exchange between actors. The institutions in charge of the environment do not fulfill their tasks. This may be related to ignorance of procedures for all staff, and above all a lack of capacity to monitor projects with external financing.

Recommendations on various issues are ignored and not distributed.

4.7 The basic structures

The Municipalities and Prefectures never feel directly concerned by environmental issues. They play no role [other than] as an administrative institution and yet, conflict management, control and community mobilization are, among other tasks, those which must [rest with] these institutions.

4.8 The NGOs and other associations

Associations and NGOs involved in environmental protection have rather limited means of intervention. Government pays no attention to their existence.

4.9 The information systems

The environmental information system (EIS) is incomplete and is based on outdated information. There is no funding to update the EIS databases.

4.10 The University of Comoros

The University of the Comoros is a very new institution (2005). Despite efforts by the authorities of the time to create it, it contains several weaknesses including the lines to provide training. Today too few science subjects are included in the university curriculum in the training environment either.

This poses several constraints at many levels for the university:

- Chronically lacks specialists in the field of environment in all areas
- The current framework of information system related to the environment does not exist
- No opportunity to work towards these sectors in the medium term

4.11 The National Centre for Documentation and Scientific Research (CNDRS)

[The CNDRS] does not have a center whose primary purpose is scientific research. Unfortunately, with the indications mentioned above, like the university, the CNDRS has no way to support actions related to environmental conservation. However with the development of ICT within the institution, certain actions can be undertaken in collaboration with foreign researchers that have at their disposal of solid assets on the issue.

4.12 The Agricultural Research Institute, Fisheries and Environment (INRAPE)

INRAPE is the Centre of Excellence in charge of environmental issues among others. But several constraints need to be addressed:

- Lack of specialists in environmental sciences
- Limited human resources at the Institute (some agronomists currently being redeveloped)
- Chronic lack of [means/capacity to] work (human, financial and educational)
- Lack of an information system on major environmental policies

STRATEGIC COMPONENTS

5.1 Component 1: Institutional Strengthening and Stability

The objective is:

- ❖ That all institutions in charge of the environment work in concert because of good information flow
- ❖ Develop the capacity to disseminate information between communities on specific areas of intervention and especially to circulate correct information
- ❖ To provide reliable coverage via telephone, audio visual and internet [to address these objectives]

The type of action required is the establishment of a multisectoral coordinating structure for all pertinent institutions.

5.2 Component 2: Access to Information

The objective is:

- ❖ Provide necessary information on the use of [areas/land], their states, their levels of use
- ❖ Establish monitoring of the state of the environment and a system of data collection to enable this role as guardian of the environment. This data collection work requires a skilled [person]
- ❖ Identification of national priorities with a concerted scientific [focus on] resource management
- ❖ Production of scientific knowledge essential to the sustainable management of the environment
- ❖ [Make] available information necessary for the establishment of a master plan on land use and land
- ❖ Design an Environmental Information System (EIS) to be able to predict risks

The type of action to take would be to strengthen the capacity of institutions and individuals in communication and management of environmental information

5.3 Component 3: Sectoral Integration

The objective is:

- ❖ To integrate environmental concerns into sectoral policies of the Ministries concerned
- ❖ Establish management committees for protected areas

The type of action to take is to develop a national strategy and action plan that integrates economic, social and ecological aspects.

5.4 Component 4: The legal and legislative [framework]

The objective is:

- ❖ Search for all [acts/legislation/regulations] concerning the conduct of impact assessments, and audits for any action on the environment
- ❖ Integration of clauses in favour of the environment on public procurement

The type of action [required is] the development of regulations to implement a legal framework concerning the environment

5.5 Component 5: Development of economic activities

The objective is:

- ❖ Move from a subsistence economy to a market economy for the grassroots communities consistent with the [sustainable] management of environmental resources
- ❖ Develop [organic products] [to increase resource value]
- ❖ Develop capacity for dynamic economic activities in adjacent areas affected by the actions

The type of action would be the development of organic and fair trade sectors

5.6 Component 6: Integration of community rules

The objective is:

- ❖ Integrate laws into the judicial system that recognise the Community rules

The type of action is the development of laws that recognize and incorporate the mechanisms used in grassroots communities

5.7 Component 7: Awareness of environmental issues

The objective is:

- ❖ Provide tools for civil society to acquire the right to a healthy environment and able to identify it
- ❖ Village associations able to implement actions and schedule them
- ❖ National NGOs strengthened, [for they are] key partners of national institutions on the implementation of programs. These must be recognized by the state institutions
- ❖ Prefectures and Municipalities play a real role as a relay

The type of action is to conduct awareness campaigns, training [at the level of] the various actors on various environmental issues

5.8 Component 8: Acquisition of specific skills

The objective is:

- ❖ Develop programs and / or sequences of courses in terms of the acquisition of specific skills
- ❖ Scientific institutions take up their roles

The type of action would be the development of training programs and research applied to the environment

5.9 Component 9: Strengthening Institutions

The objective is:

- ❖ To draw upon the relevant structures to ensure the necessary influence despite the repeated changes of the authorities at both the Union and the island level.
- ❖ That Institutions in charge of the environment fully assume their role with recognized mandates for planning, coordination and accepted by all partners for the management of environmental resources

- ❖ That these institutions have the means necessary in human resources, logistics and training to be able to properly carry out their missions resulting from programs implemented
- ❖ The establishment of mechanisms for planning, coordination and consultation and finally evaluation of programs implemented

The type of action to take is to strengthen systemic capacities of different local, island and national institutions

VI. PROPOSAL FOR A PLAN OF ACTION ON CAPACITY BUILDING

Strategic components	Type of Action	Actions
Stability and institutional strengthening	<i>Establish a multisectoral coordinating structure for all relevant institutions.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating national policy on the environment • Diagnostic assessment of existing knowledge • Update of the legal framework concerning the environment • Formation of different government actors (legislators, lawyers, judges, legislative drafters) which are the subject of texts to prepare and revise • Map of Human Resource Management • Transparency in recruitment of staff

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement of performance • Establishment of mechanisms for planning, coordination and regular evaluation.
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Access to information	<i>Strengthen the capacity of institutions and individuals in communication and management of environmental information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the knowledge requirements necessary to design measures for natural resource management • Creating a Board of Guidance [steering committee?] and boards to evaluate the relevance of projects • Wide dissemination of information on the vulnerability of ecosystems and resources to educate communities about the risks of ecological disturbances
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Sectoral integration	<i>Develop a national strategy and action plan that integrates sustainable economic, social and ecological aspects</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition of individual skills specific to the development of a sustainable development strategy • Diagnostic assessment on the current state of the country's environment • Proposal for a national strategy for sustainable development • Establishment of environmental units in all ministries
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The legal and	<i>Development of legislation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting environmental impact assessments as a prerequisite to any public or private
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legislative [framework]	<i>implementing the Framework Law on Environment</i>	[activity] or investment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop implementing legislation making impact studies unavoidable • Conduct environmental audits on existing sites, [both] public and private • Develop implementing legislation making audits compulsory
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Development of economic activities	<i>Develop organic and fair trade sectors</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness about the benefits of production and certification of organic and fair trade [produce] • Training of various stakeholders on the certification process • Access to information on international markets • Introduction of incentives for organic and fair trade production
Integration of community rules	<i>Elaboration of laws that recognize and incorporate the mechanisms operative in grassroots communities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studies on the inconsistencies between civil law and Community rules • Consultation of all parties to formalize regulations concerning environmental issues • Evaluate the advantages in integrating the two rights [systems]

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting and implementing legislation recognizing the operational mechanisms of Community law
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Environmental awareness	<i>Conduct awareness campaigns, training at the level of the various actors on various environmental issues</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of modules about environmental protection in primary and secondary schools • Achieve targeted campaigns on environmental protection and current issues
Acquisition of specific skills	<i>Develop training and research programs applied to the environment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate environmental training at the University of Comoros • Develop online training for professionals and students • Conduct refresher training for students and professionals

VII. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND EXPECTED RESULTS

Strategic component	Expected Results:	Budget (KMF)
Stability and institutional strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The various institutions in charge of the environment ensure their roles according to the recognized mandates [of/concerning] planning, coordination, control, monitoring and evaluation ▪ Institutions are provided with management plans for human resources which provide training plans 	4,000,000

	and diagrams of redeployment if necessary	
Access to information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Management and flow of information to allow institutions to work together ▪ Wide dissemination of already validated information on climate, resources, water and soil ▪ Knowledge developed concerning the management of the environment is sustained and accessible to all users ▪ Librarians and archivists are able to provide information related to the environment on demand 	6,000,000
Sectoral integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Environmental units are implemented in ministries to ensure integration of environmental concerns into sectoral policies 	3,000,000
The legal and legislative [framework]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Environmental policy is revised and adapted to the principles of sustainable development taking into account the institutional [make-up] of the Comoros ▪ The country adopts a legal framework on the environment, complemented by all the implementing legislation ▪ Lawyers, judges, police officers are trained and sensitized on the practice of this legislation ▪ Framework Law on Environment is supplemented by implementing legislation mandating the implementation of environmental impact studies prior to any authorization of public or private investment ▪ The legal framework is supplemented by implementing legislation mandating environmental audits of existing facilities 	10 000 000

Development of economic activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grassroots communities contribute to GDP by moving from a subsistence economy to a market economy compatible with the sustainable use of natural resources ▪ Organic and fair trade production, based on the development of resources is implemented 	10 000 000
Integration of community rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The legislative framework recognizes the community rules, defines the [intersection(s)] in relation to civil law and sets terms for the transfer of disputes from the community domain to civil 	5,000,000

	law	
Environmental awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educational institutions integrate environmental education into the curricula of students (primary and secondary) ▪ The institutions in charge of the environment and education collaborate in the design and implementation of awareness programs and environmental education for people outside of school ▪ The police is sufficiently involved and aware of the issues to be able to take a position in real-time on the implementation of conventions ▪ Traders are aware of environmental issues to develop environmentally friendly activities ▪ Associations and NGOs are equipped to educate communities on environmental issues ▪ The natural resource users are aware of the finite nature of natural resources 	12,000,000
Acquisition of specific skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The University of Comoros capitalizes online training available based on knowledge and skills required for sustainable development of the Comoros ▪ Training programs and curricula are developed in terms of capabilities and skills to be able to contribute in a manner relevant to country needs ▪ Environmental specialists (agronomists, foresters, fisheries engineers, oceanographers ...) are trained to put their skills to the design of policies, technical measures, planning schemes which contribute to a sound environmental management and natural resources and risk prevention and disaster management ▪ Develop the capacities of different stakeholders on negotiation skills 	30,000,000
TOTALS		80,000,000

VIII. Contribution to the MEDA (Marine Ecosystem Diagnostic Analysis)

The focal points of the countries will be responsible for collecting data in collaboration with relevant institutions and services in areas where developments lend themselves to special attention. Their role will be to oversee the actions taken, [and host] community meetings in order to raise awareness of the [matters above].

Punctuality [is imperative] for the ASCLME to deliver its information in real time.

All this requires:

- The establishment of a comprehensive bibliography
- To establish a database on the development of coastal ecosystems
- A [data and information center] on (I) fishing, ocean conditions and development of these
- Establish an Atlas of the marine ecosystem of the Comoros

With such an approach, the MEDA will be a tool for synthesis of all the ecosystems of the region and will provide timely information required by specialists and populations. This allows sharing of information, identification of weaknesses and proposes recommendations on strategies to be adopted at the ASCLME project level .

- At the level of the Indian Ocean region, the information will be fluid [there will be information flow?] and all countries will benefit
- Creating an ASCLME Project database on the development of marine ecosystems also enabled the country to regularly update
- All publications must be within reach of the country to have the same [understanding] of the situation of ecosystem development
- Also the reports of the ASCLME Project
- An effort on the establishment of an Atlas in each country on the development of ecosystems

- Gathering of all decrees, orders, laws and other acts concerning the preservation and protection of marine ecosystems with a view to the formation of lobbies for their execution
- Train [experts], especially in the Comoros, which has virtually no sufficient human resources in the field
- Creation of a site that specializes at regional level will be an essential tool for different users [center of excellence? data repository? the meaning is not clear, but the translation is accurate]