

MAURITIUS ANNEX X. DLIST SUMMARY REPORT LE MORNE

The Le Morne Village has about 1,700 inhabitants. It is the village that was chosen as a demonstration site for Mauritius and it is located on the south-western corner of the Island. The economy of the area ranges from subsistence and small-scale fisheries, to a number of local guesthouses and five high end hotels. The small village is economically depressed with the inhabitants mostly depending on jobs



Figure 20: Fire coral surrounded by algae in the Le Morne lagoon

elsewhere and then usually only getting low-income types of employment because of low standard of formal education. Nonetheless, considering its exceptional heritage status and ecotourism potential, the area could offer additional economic opportunities to the local population, as well as to the country at large.

The community is also dependent on the local lagoon which is shared among various stakeholders who live or are economically active in the area. Currently, the lagoon is not in a good state and seems to be highly polluted and large amounts of algae are found in the lagoon (Figure 20). The fishers in Le Morne stated that it would be good to have a management plan for the lagoon after a thorough assessment of the area has been done. This may be done in the

near future with coordination from the Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund.

There are many stakeholders in Le Morne. The list below indicates the ones identified through the interviews and group discussions:

- a. Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund
- b. SEED (Le Service d' Ecoute et de Developement) – an NGO working with development and schooling issues all over Mauritius
- c. Women Association
- d. Senior Citizen Association
- e. Parents Teachers Association
- f. Youth Association
- g. Fishermen Association
- h. Fisherwomen Association
- i. Village council
- j. Black River District Council
- k. Hotel operators
- l. Promoters/land owners
- m. Government (Ministry of Arts and Culture, Ministry of Fisheries etc)

1.1 Can the marine and coastal resources support the community?

It should be noted that at various points it was stressed by the fishers that they are part of the larger Le Morne community and in fact, the Draft LED Plan for the le Morne Cultural Landscape clearly shows that this is very much a fishing community . Fishers and fishing issues cannot be approached in isolation. Many fishers also engage in other activities and the vast majority of people in the village engage in fishing activities, even though they are not classified as fishers (including fishing for shrimps, crabs, shellfish, etc.). The more commercial fishers catch a variety of fish which they store in fridges and sell to anyone who gives them a good price – including the local community and tourists from the nearby hotels. Most of the fishers say that the income they get from fishing is insufficient and they would like to

find some alternative ways to make money. People are concerned that the fish catches are going down and they want something to be done to improve the state of the lagoon.

The demonstration site in Le Morne

There have been five field trips specifically focusing on the Le Morne demo site, and an additional five trips where 50% of the time was spent on the site. The DLIST team included marine biologists, LED specialists, stakeholder involvement specialists, architectural specialists, heritage specialists and tourism specialists. The LED planning process is well on its way with the first draft already submitted for comment to the Government of Mauritius. There have been three main public and 9 interest group meetings. Feedback consultations on the LED plan is currently happening. The first meeting included the Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund (LMHTF) board, the LMHTF site office team and the local NGO, SEED. The second meeting was with community members and stakeholders. With the support of the LMHTF two meetings with the fishers were held. During the visioning phase, group based consultative workshops with six identified Community-Based Associations (CBA's) were undertaken, these included the senior citizens association, women's association, Le Morne Village Council, Parent Teachers Association (PTA), youth associations and NGO's. A total of 252 socio-economic questionnaires were analysed and categorised. The third community meeting was held where the findings of the LED process and a draft Vision for Le Morne was presented to community members. Organisations involved include the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications, Ministry of Housing and Lands, and relevant institutions such as the Black River District Council. Dedicated meetings with council and local authorities were paramount. Private sector involvement included consultations with developers, promoters, donor agencies and hotels.

1.2 Alternative livelihood options leading to poverty reduction

From the one-on-one interviews done with a total of 25 fishermen – a number of alternative livelihoods were stated. These are listed below:

1. Boat trips with tourists in the sea
2. Sport fishing in the lagoon
3. Snorkelling
4. Growing vegetables
5. Animal husbandry
6. Cultivation of other plants

Other fishermen felt that they had been fishing for a long time and would not want to change and do something else when they are old. From the Local Economic Development (LED) Plan being done for Le Morne, there were a number of identified skills in the community that can boost the development of the community. Examples of skills identified were;

- i. Technically related (plumber, electrician, painter);
- ii. Artistic (musician, handicraft, artist/painter, dancer, poetry, etc);
- iii. Sports related (swimmer, football, cycling, etc);
- iv. Professional (driver, cook, cleaner, tailor, secretary, gardener etc);

1.3 Weaknesses and opportunities for sustainable community development

The list of weaknesses and opportunities identified in Le Morne come from the LED planning exercise and are given in the Table 8 below:

Table 8: Identifies weaknesses and opportunities for development in Le Morne

Issues	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Remarks/Suggestions
Sewerage and grey water	The sewerage and drainage system is out of date and needs to be improved as a matter of great urgency	Community can be engaged as part of public works teams to put in a proper system; grey water to be treated and re-used	The issue of the sewage disposal poses a serious threat to the health and livelihood of the communities ¹
Environmental	There is a need for a clean-	Community can be involved in	This issue can be presented by

¹ This issue can be presented to the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities and the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. It should be noted that the new high tension power cable will be buried in the village, and it may be possible that the sewerage system can be addressed at the same time.

custodianship	up campaign behind the village hall up to the round-about, and other areas	clean-up campaign; this is also an opportunity for environmental education	the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development
Land accessibility, lack of land for development, and land ownership	Lack of land to grow crops for food security and create new livelihoods is an overriding and cross-cutting obstacle, affecting the local economy	Many people want access to agricultural land previously used by the village so they can grow their own crops and rear animals, both for household consumption and to sell	People must grow their own food to ensure long term self-sufficiency. It was stressed that access to land, even a small piece, can be a major boost to household income
	Village is squeezed into a thin strip of land. Land needed for village to expand, and facilities to be created	A multi-purpose centre and other facilities can be constructed and football field can be closer to town	The Ministry of Housing and Lands should be requested to facilitate access to the land behind the village
Business environment	Lack of access to finance hampers all types of business development	Many people in the Le Morne Cultural Landscape (LMCL) has the capacity and potential to develop business	National Empowerment Fund (NEF) to be approached, and micro-finance schemes created
	There is a need for a fruit & vegetable market, fish market for fishermen, as well as a market for craft makers from the village	Spatial Development Plan (SDF) can propose town planning to improve town grounds without damaging essential character and heritage, diversifying attractions	This will be a platform and opportunity for people to showcase and sell their products, clearly there is a need for those markets as fish is sold elsewhere, and vegetables are imported
Facilities and Infrastructure	Access to the public beach on the west side if hampered by a road that has been closed	Develop a public beach in the village with toilet facilities and lights	Open the road which goes around LMCL and passes by Trou Chenille through to the slave route monument
	The village needs childcare facilities to help the women while they search for work	With their children safe and taken care of, the labour market can be developed better	The potential of women is curtailed because there is no childcare facilities
	There is a need for a pass around the bay because at low tide there are problems ²		
			A hotel should be developed in the village
			Develop bungalows on the land behind the village for kite surfers to create more work ³
	Lack of public health facilities, e.g. medical centres	Money and even lives will be saved if people have medical facilities in, or closer to town	The clinic that was inaugurated seldom if ever came again to the town
	There are problems with the kite and wind surfers ⁴		
	There is a need for more bus stops in the village	Better public transport will save time	Transport problems must be investigated
			Fourneau Island should be developed ⁵
	There is a need for a police station	Possibility of putting community policing system in place	There are social problems, including drugs
Leisure facilities	The villages lack opportunities, facilities and activities for the young	Proper facilities will greatly improve the interest of youth in developing themselves	The football ground has been damaged, and there is a need for infrastructure for leisure,

² It is proposed that issues of using the lagoon be addressed in a lagoon management plan (initiative of the fishers) as well as the "Le Morne Pressure Zone" initiative of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development.

³ This proposal came from the owner of the land behind the village.

⁴ Many fishers, men and women cited problems with the kite surfers and the issue must be addressed in a lagoon management plan, or by the ICZM initiative of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development.

⁵ One person only proposed this idea; most people are very much in favour of the island remaining in its natural state.

	people		children and sport activities
	The Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund (LMHTF) site office closes too early	The LMHTF site office can be a focal point for information sharing, training in heritage, etc.	It is the only place where people can get the internet
Security and safety	Lack of security measures near the school	Better safety measures will lead to an improved environment for residents as well as visitors	There is a need for a separation between the pedestrian roadside and the road near the school as well as a speed hump
Education and capacity building	There are poor school results in the government schools, many people are not literate	Human potential can be much better developed for short-, medium and long-term benefits	There is a need to hold educational meetings with parents, and do alphabetisation for all inhabitants
	There is lack of capacity building opportunities for youngsters and women	Capacity building will very quickly improve the human resources, which will have many positive spin-offs	A multi-purpose centre can be created where skills can be learned and all ages can get together to share information and ideas
Other needs:	People operate without licenses or permits which means they cannot market openly	Legal businesses can more easily and openly advertise, for instance guesthouses on the internet	LMHTF can assist people who want to begin businesses to get permit and operate legally
	Hindu people wanted a plot of land to construct a place where they can pray, but up to now there is no place	Cultural diversity will add to the attraction of the village	They have made many queries, but no response yet

Level of schooling/educational background

The level of formal education in Le Morne village is very low; over 50% of the interviewed inhabitants had only completed primary education. In spite of the low level of education in Le Morne, inhabitants have a range of artistic, technical, sportive and professional skills to offer. Additionally, 16 participants indicated that they required training in their field of interest. There was a strong sentiment that “prior knowledge learning”, that is skills without certification, should be acknowledged and that people may be assisted in acquiring certification.

Quality of life and safety

Quality of life is defined as the personal contentment (or discontent) with the cultural or intellectual circumstances under which a person lives⁶, and it is different from material contentment. Over 70% of the inhabitants interviewed indicated that their quality of life was fair, while 14% rated their quality of life as being poor. It is not surprising that only 6% of the people interviewed considered their life as good.

1.4 Bottom-up and top-down communication

Communication in Le Morne is through the announcements made by villagers either through word of mouth or notices sent door to door. Notices are also put up in the village hall where people sometimes have meetings. The villagers communicate largely through cell phones. There is a small area in the Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund office where the local community can get access to the internet. This is widely used by the youth and they communicate to each through various social networks. Through the work with the demonstration site and the Le Morne Local Economic Development Plan, the communication channels between for example the Ministry of Fisheries and the fishing associations have been improved. It is anticipated that this will be further enhanced through the continued work with this site. It is also significant that the Ministry of Fisheries have already adopted the approach in three other fishing villages where the demonstration sites can be replicated during the ASCLME Project implementation phase.

⁶ Princeton University, <http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=quality%20of%20life>

