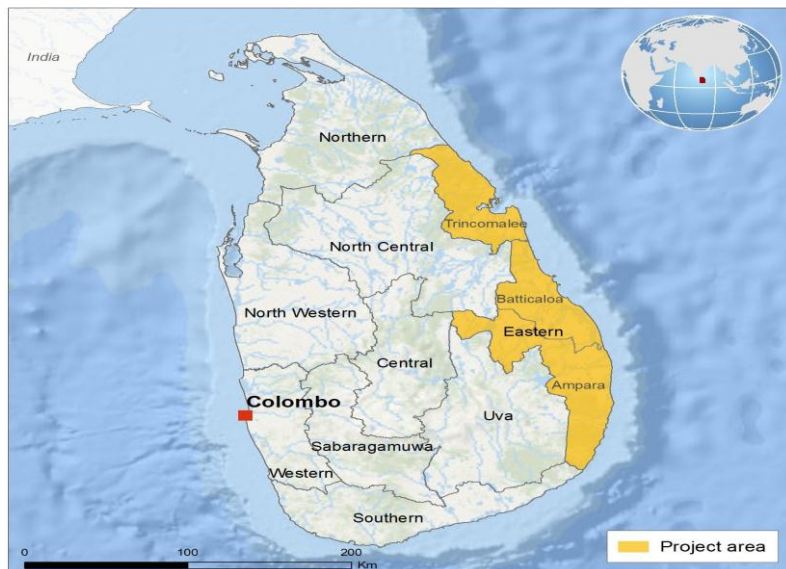


# SRI LANKA

## Participatory Coastal Zone Restoration and Sustainable Management in the Eastern Province of Post-Tsunami Sri Lanka



The designations employed and the presentation of the material in the map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IFAD concerning the delimitation of the frontiers or boundaries, or the authorities thereof.

## ISSUES

The Eastern Province of Sri Lanka bore the brunt of the damage when the Indian Ocean Tsunami struck the island on the morning of 26th December 2004. As well as causing the deaths of 14,345 people, displacing over 220,000 people, and destroying most of the fishing industry in the region, it also caused extensive damage to coastal ecosystems. The value of these ecosystems in providing protection was apparent to all, in that lives were saved and property protected where coastal lagoons, mangroves and sand dunes had not been degraded by poor management. Naturally, in the immediate aftermath of the tsunami, humanitarian considerations were given the highest priority to provide rescue, relief, and emergency support to the survivors. However, due to lack of capacity, technical knowledge, and inadequate institutional coordination, the national reconstruction response did not address ecosystem restoration and broad conservation objectives. These were given low priority leading to responses that were unsupportive of the sound utilisation of natural resources, which most of the local communities of the east coast are dependent upon to sustain their livelihoods.

## ACTIONS

The project design focuses on overcoming three key barriers to the restoration of coastal ecosystems: i) the gap in technical knowledge for low-cost restoration methods; ii) low priority assigned to environmental issues during the tsunami relief and reconstruction programme; and iii) continuation of ecosystem and land degradation processes.

As a means to address these interrelated challenges, a multistakeholder approach bringing together local communities, in partnership with national and local government agencies, has been pursued. The three main outcomes the project seeks to achieve are the following:

**Develop best practices for effective restoration and sustainable management of key coastal ecosystems.** The first steps involved the establishment of inventories of flora and fauna to assess the damage and to determine the actions to be taken to restore ecosystem functionality. Through a participatory process, communities were encouraged to experiment with restoration techniques based on local knowledge and practices.



The Global Environment Facility (GEF) brings together 183 countries, the private sector, civil society organizations and international institutions to address global environmental problems. The GEF-IFAD partnership promotes win-win solutions to deliver both global environmental benefits as well as significant gains for rural poor people.



Investing in rural people

### PROJECT SUMMARY

Total cost: US\$14.8 m

Approved IFAD loan:  
US\$7.1 m

GEF: US\$7.2 million  
IUCN: US\$55,000

Other contributions:  
Government of Sri Lanka  
US\$430,000;

Project period:  
7 years (2009-2016)

Executing agency:  
Coast Conservation and Coastal  
Resource Management  
(CC&CRM), under the Ministry of  
Environment

Beneficiaries: 41,760  
households

Project objective: Mainstream  
ecosystem restoration and sustainable  
management into post-tsunami  
reconstruction in support of sustainable  
livelihoods and reduced vulnerability to  
climate change along the east coast of  
Sri Lanka

Communities then selected from amongst the most successful pilot tests, the approaches and techniques for scaling up.

**Mainstream effective ecosystem restoration and sustainable management into post-tsunami reconstruction planning and implementation** through a review of existing policies and a policy dialogue process to address the gaps and incoherence. Efforts are being taken to develop appropriate policy guidelines for ecological restoration, adaptation to climate change and to mainstream these into the existing policy framework. The establishment of Ecosystem Restoration and Adaptation Units (ERAU) in targeted districts is anticipated not only to pilot innovative ecosystem restoration approaches but also, to provide a channel for feeding evidence from the ground to the policy process.

**Empower coastal communities to manage local natural resources to enhance sustainable livelihoods.** A recent amendment to the Coast Conservation Act provides a legal framework for establishing co-management agreements with local stakeholders groups. Priority is being given to ensuring the successful long-term conservation of newly-restored habitats and their sustainable use through training local communities in natural resource planning and conflict resolution techniques, and in sustainable land management practices.

## EXPECTED IMPACTS

Best practices for effective restoration and sustainable management of key coastal ecosystems with integration of adaptation to climate change have been developed in Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Ampara districts. Under this component, the project is meeting the following targets:

- 1,000 hectares of coastal lagoons, 50 hectares of sand dunes and 250 hectares of mangroves are under full restoration using best practice guidelines.
- Maps are being prepared for each ecosystem entity to reflect bio-physical change trends, habitat distribution and associated economic values to enable analyses of the baseline situation that is targeted by restoration.
- A pilot scale hydraulic restoration is underway in the Pottuvil (Kottukal) Lagoon, which was identified on the

basis of gradients and consultation with the traditional fishers for an historical analysis detailing best habitats for shrimp catches.

Effective ecosystem restoration and sustainable management with integrated options for climate change vulnerabilities are being mainstreamed into post-tsunami reconstruction by relevant authorities and donors. Under this component, the project is meeting the following targets:

- The project has facilitated an amendment of the Coast Conservation Act, which grants legal conservation status (as a Special Area of Management) to coastal zones undergoing ecosystem restoration.
- ERAUs have been established within the Coast Conservation Department to assume responsibility for promoting, facilitating and supervising ecosystem restoration and sustainable resource use.
- ERAU staff are presently working with the project team on the pilot tests at demonstration sites; and will take a leading role in the selection of new sites for ecosystem restoration.

Coastal communities have been empowered to manage local natural resources to enhance sustainable livelihoods and adaptation to climate change vulnerabilities. Under this component the project is meeting the following targets:

- Amendment to Coastal Conservation Act passed enabling community co-management of natural resources and adaptation to climate change;
- Co-management activities ongoing for lagoon conservation (Vakarai, Komari and Pottuvil) and Pigeon Island coral restoration, conservation of Sathurukondan wetland site and Upparu mangrove forest.

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