Progress of the Dugong & Seagrass Conservation Project in Solomon Islands

3rd Executive Project Steering Committee meeting
21-23 November, 2017
Trang, Thailand
Past, present and future of dugong and seagrass conservation in Solomon Islands

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Baseline in 2015</th>
<th>Progress by 2017</th>
<th>Targets for 2018</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Dugongs: Data based on survey done in 2009</td>
<td>• Dugongs: indigenous book on dugong, threats occurrence for all project sites</td>
<td>• Dugongs: national database to be managed by...; status identified and communicated;</td>
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<td>• Seagrass: latest data was in 2004. Data found 10 spp in SI</td>
<td>• Seagrass: maps/data on composition, distribution, use and abundancy for few sites in Lau lagoon</td>
<td>• Seagrass: national database and provisioning ecosystem services valuation; status</td>
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<td>• Communities: community-based monitoring/management structures exists but not integrating dugongs</td>
<td>• Policies: Draft regulation on dugong selling ban in MFMR</td>
<td>• Policies: A regulation in place for banning dugong selling</td>
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<td>• Incentives: No incentives</td>
<td>• Communities: 1 community participated in CMS dugong questionnaire</td>
<td>• Communities: 20 communities participate in monitoring/management of dugong/seagrass hotspots</td>
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<td>• Policies: No policies or regulations on seagrass and dugong specifically</td>
<td>• No incentives for communities under project</td>
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Results from dugong research

- Our dugong research questions: find out more about dugong capture and sighting.
- CMS Dugong Bycatch Question
- Dugong hotspots - Lau Lagoon, Tetepare
- Sightings of dugongs since 2015 – 2 dead and 5 live cases (anecdote report)
- Top 3 threats to dugongs: fishers, logging companies, OBM - monitoring and awareness.
- Data on dugongs hosted by MECDM
- 2018: continue dugong research
- Explore further hotspots and breeding sites of dugongs in Solomon Islands.
Dugong sighting in Lau Lagoon
Results from seagrass research

• Our seagrass research question: What seagrass species distribution and density is found in 12+ regional sites.
• Method: Seagrass Watch (mapping and monitoring).
• 21 local sites for research area for seagrass in Lau Lagoon
• Threat-development on land-Sedimentation runoff
• Important research results: – First seagrass mapping sites at Lau Lagoon sites.
• All data on seagrass hosted by MECDM
• 2018: Current data from project sites are with partners and this will be analyzed before sharing
Project policy response to dugong & seagrass conservation needs in Solomon Islands

• Policy needs in 2015: a regulation on seagrass or dugong specifically.
• Key policy gaps by 2017: A policy gap analysis has been carried out by WorldFish, but not specific on both species.
• 3 key results by 2017
  ✓ A policy gap analyses by WorldFish
  ✓ MFMR working on a draft regulation for banning dugongs from being sold, WorldFish working on a policy brief on dugongs.
  ✓ DSCP Network of NGOs & Ministries (NFC)
  ✓ Concept note on National Strategy on DSG
  ✓ Lau Lagoon (Dugong & Seagrass) proposed priority site for GEF 7
• Dugong Management strategy will be finalized in early 2018
Community-based stewardship of dugongs and their seagrass habitats

- In 2015, community work in 7 regional sites, but not focus on dugongs
- In 2017: Confirmed sightings of dugongs in 2 regional (Tetepare & Lau Lagoon), 30+ local sites
- Community needs: Awareness on dugongs & seagrass
- Common threats: overfishing & sedimentation; hunting in Gizo.
- Follow up by MECDM & DSCP
- 3 key results: 30+ communities integrating DSG in their management sites. LMMA established in 4 sites. SIRA supporting sites, Participatory mapping
- CBRM training on women, men, youth- est.20 to 30 people per community
- Tetepare had more women involved in monitoring of seagrasses in managed areas.
- 2018: Working model of community-based seagrass management
- Unaddressed community needs: Funding for SIRA
Education & Awareness about dugongs and seagrass

• **Audience- 1). Schools, 2) Coastal Communities 3) Policymakers**- need awareness materials on seagrass and dugongs.

• **results from education & awareness:** Lau maps distributed to schools, NGO’s & Govt. Ministries, Presentation & awareness booth during Solomon Islands National Resource Management Symposium, Radio shows every Wednesday on Seagrass & Dugongs.

• **Effectiveness and sustainability of education & awareness activities**- Training of volunteers to carryout dugong questionnaire, distribution of posters & involvement of Govt. officers in awareness and training.

• **2018:**
  - Carry out dugong questionnaires in provinces, Ministries to disseminate information to rural communities in the provinces.
  - Communications strategy disseminated to public and ministries, children's book on dugongs published
Solomon Islands lessons learned

- **What went well and why?**
  - DSCP Participation at the 1st Solomon Islands National Resource Management Symposium
  - Participation in Seagrass Monitoring and dugong questionnaire training in Port Villa Vanuatu
  - CMS Questionnaire Training for at least 18 personnel's are key hotspot sites within the SICCP Partnership Network and beyond.

- **What went wrong and why?**
  - Low performance in projects as a result of poor communication between stakeholders and poor delivery of reports.

- **How can we do better?**
  - Constant communication between PCT, partners and NFC
  - Improve reporting
Next steps

SB2
SICCP has subcontracted local Community Based Organization to conduct a series of awareness sessions at their respective sites

SB3
- Book on Traditional children's story
- Produce maps on seagrass in sites esp. Lau
- Produce several maps on transects, seagrass species composition & density of seagrass

SB4
-- Complete and finalize at least two (2) LMMA sites within the SICCP Partnership Network
- Incorporate seagrass and dugong Conservation into Tetepare Island Management Plan to be able to deliver an Integrated Management Plan

SB1/5
- Facilitate NFC meetings (On going)
- Prepare for 2018 Dugong & Seagrass regional workshop
- Coordinate partners progress for the remaining months of the project
Thank U Tumas