



PROTECTING DUGONGS
CONSERVING SEAGRASS
CHANGE FOR COMMUNITIES

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للمحافظة على الكائنات الحية
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COUNTRY PRESENTATION: Solomon Islands

*INCEPTION WORKSHOP
THE GEF DUGONG AND SEAGRASS CONSERVATION PROJECT
20-21 October 2015
Colombo, Sri Lanka*



SICC
Solomon Islands Community
Conservation Partnership

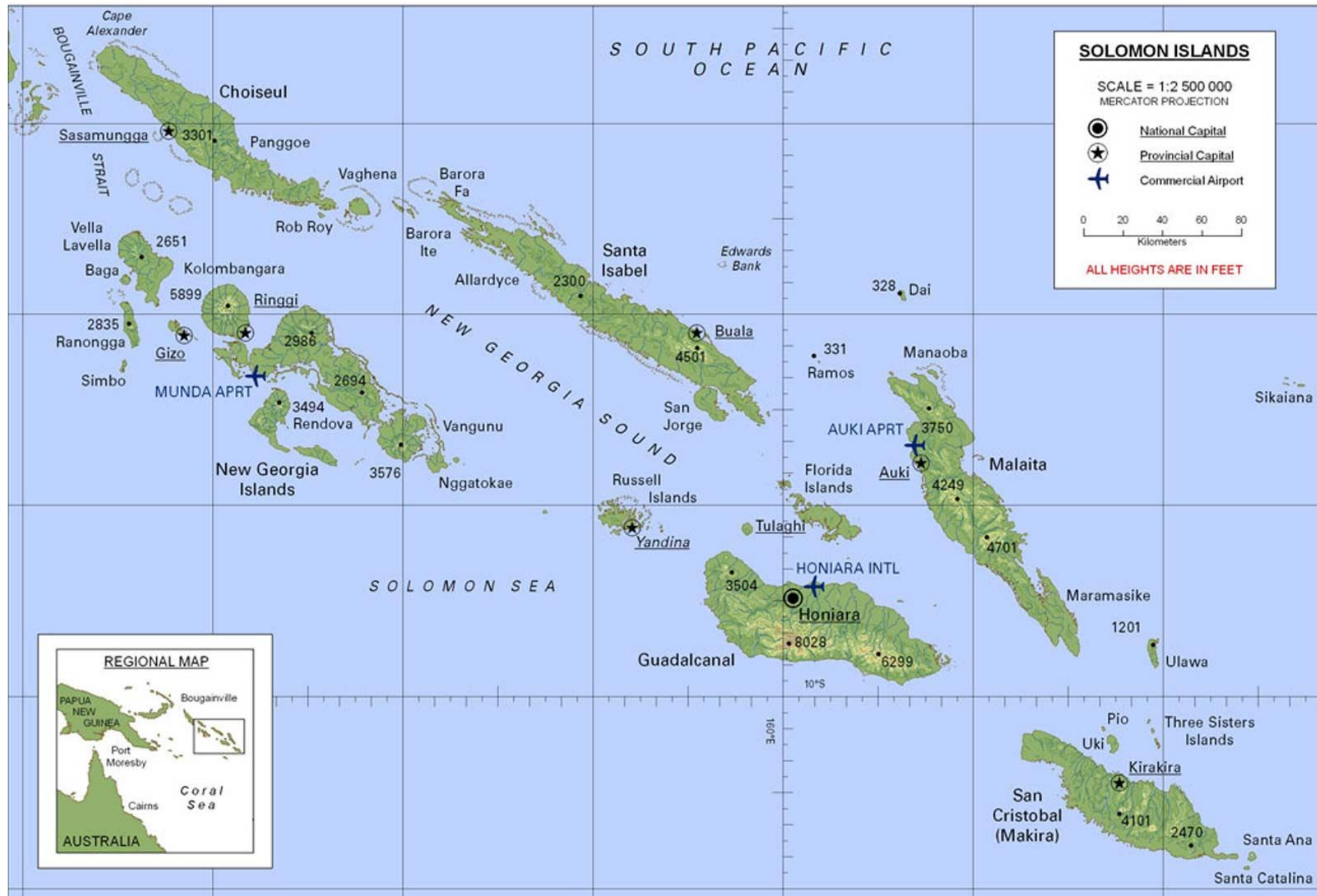


Content

- **Overview: Solomon Islands**
 - *Physical, socio-economical and ecological features*
- **Seagrass and Dugongs in Solomon Islands**
- **Our Project :**
 - *Solomon Islands Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project*



Solomon Islands



Bio-physical characteristics

- 992 islands
- Total land area – 28,000km²
- Total sea area – 1,340,000km²
- Total coral reef area – 3,591km²
- Total mangrove area – 65,000ha
- Total seagrass area – 10,000ha
- **80% of land is under Customary Tenure (*recognized by Constitution*).**



Socio-Economic facts

- Population (2009 Census) :

Total	Urban (Honiara + Provincial centers)	Rural
515,870	101,798 (25%)	414,072 (75%)

- Annual growth rate: 3.5%
- Male/Female Ratio: 1.05: 1 (nearly half of population)
- Children <15yrs: make up 41 %
- Literacy rate: 84.1 %

- Poverty lines (UNDP HIES, 2008)

Gini Coefficient of inequality	
Per capita a.e expenditure	Gini coefficient
National average	0.39
Honiara	0.30
Provincial urban	0.31
Rural areas	0.32

- **Diverse culture and people:**
 - Melanesians (highest), Polynesians and Micronesians

- ~ 80 different languages

- **Dual economy: formal and informal**

- **Commercial:** natural resource dependent on forestry, fisheries, copra, cocoa, etc . Limited manufacturing and processing exist.

- **Subsistence:** fishers, farmers

- **85% of people live in rural communities = heavily depend on the land & sea resources for food, income and livelihood.**



- **61% of all HHs involved in fishing activities**; 22% urban and 69% of rural. Three-quarter of the fish consumed was reef fish, 40% was tuna, 11% shellfish, and 9% freshwater fish (*2009 census*).
- The **main source of household income** was with 44% of all households the **sale of fish, crops, or handicrafts**: 52% rural, 9% urban (*2009 census*)
- Fish consumption: **33kg/year (90% fresh fish)** (*SI SCTR, 2012*)

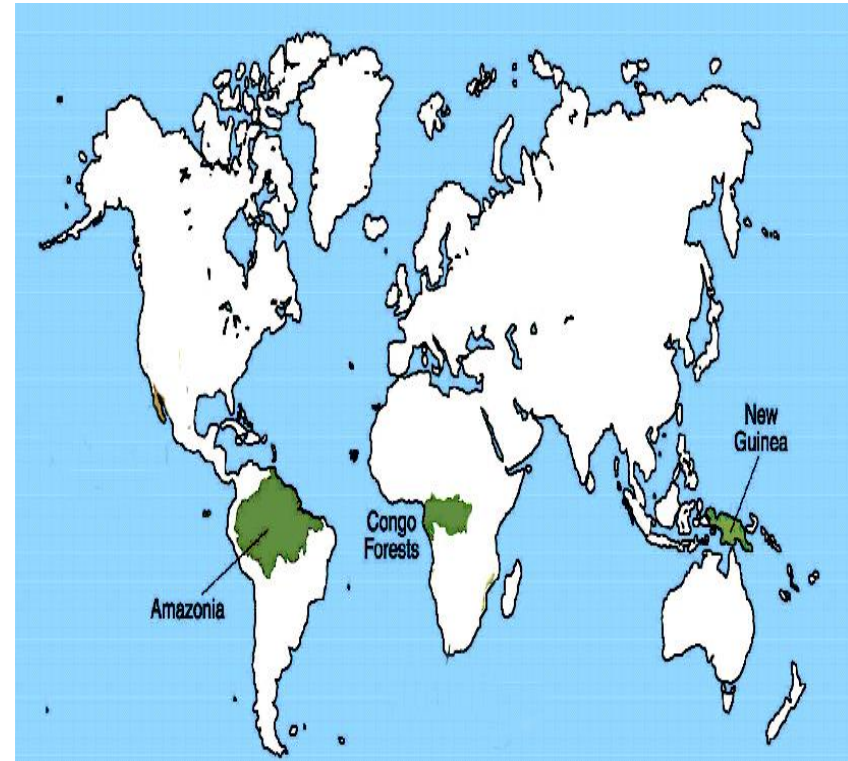


SI natural environment : unique and diverse

FOREST:

SI one of the last great rainforests of the world : Center of Plant Diversity - *est. 5000 spp.*

- 500 native Orchids
- 400 native Ferns
- 100 commercial timber trees
- 50 native Palms
- 31/60 (50%) of world's exclusively mangrove trees



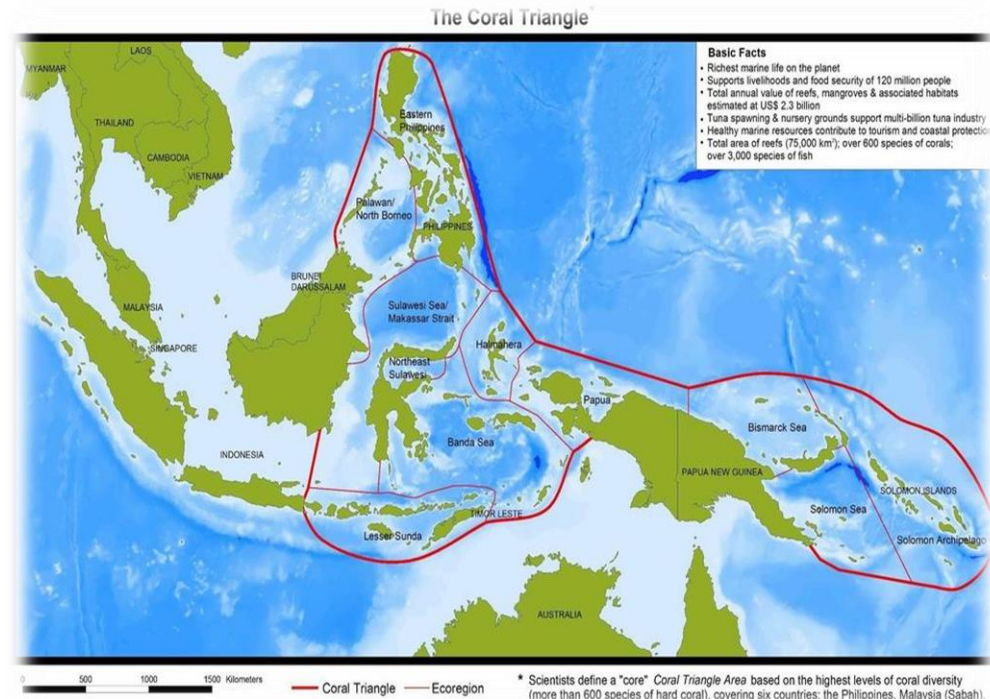
Marine & Coastal Ecosystems

■ High Diversity :

Coral and fish spp. (Coral Triangle region)

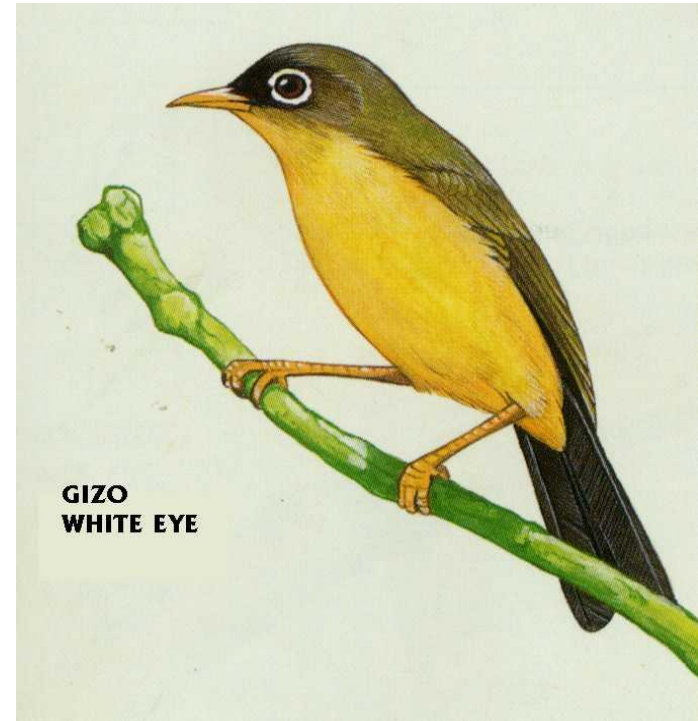
■ Hosts Key Habitats:

Key Nesting beaches for endangered Hawksbill & Leatherback turtle; Dugong, Dolphins; Large extent of mangrove forests; Major Tuna fishing grounds



ENDEMISM & THREATENED – BIRDS, MAMMALS, REPTILES...

- Gizo White- eye (bird) endemic to SI
- Bats (34 known spp, 19 endemic, 2 critically endangered), Dugongs
- Hawksbill & Leatherback turtle
Monkey-Tailed skink (largest in the world)



Solomon Islands diverse
land and sea resources
are important for peoples
livelihood and wellbeing.



Legislation and Other Policy Frameworks:

1. Environment Act 1998 (Regulation 2008)
2. Wildlife Management & Protection Act 1998 (Reg. 2008)
3. Protected Areas Act 2010 (Reg. 2012)
4. Others- Fisheries Act ; Quarantine Act, Forestry etc...
5. Provincial Ordinances (some)
6. Bi/Multi-lateral partnership agreements (BSSE), Regional Environmental Programmes (SPREP/IUCN), Global treaties/MEAs (UNCCD, UNFCCC, CITES, UNCBD, Dugong MOU)
7. Series of Policies and Strategies incl. NBSAP, CTI NPOA, NAPA, Solid Waste Management Strategic and Action Plan, Marine Turtles Action plans....
8. Partnerships and Networking with NGOs, Communities , Private sector (e.g. Tourism), Provincial governments, church groups, women and youth participation, Academia and Research Institutes, Researchers....



Seagrass Information

Previous Studies:

(1) 1970 - Womersley & Bailey - identified 7 spp.

(2) 2004 – SI Rapid Ecological Assessments (McKenzie et al. 2006)

- ✓ Distribution : ~10,000 ha. 66.3 (6% of seagrass est. Melanesia region.)
- ✓ No. of Species: 10 spp. confirmed (80% known species in region)
- ✓ Largest seagrass meadow found in Malaita Province (>1000ha)

☐ Since then, no broad-scale mapping of seagrass areas were conducted / ground-truth.

☐ Community monitoring of seagrass health/coverage linked with Locally managed marine areas or conservation work. Led by CBOs/NGOs

Dugong Information

Previous Studies:

(1) 2009 – Dugong Surveys of the SI (Bass. D. 2009)

- ✓ Perspective Survey for dugong sightings/occurrence in 6 Provinces
- ✓ Highest number of dugong sightings reported – north-east Choiseul, Honiara bay, northern Malaita, Marovo Lagoon and Samasodu coast of Isabel Province and Western Province.
- Not a common diet– opportunistically hunted.
- Some places - dugongs are revered as tribal totems, and have cultural stories attached to them. As such, they are not eaten.

Conservation vs. Development

- Coastal Development - Port/wharves, Roads, Bridges etc.
- Logging, particularly construction of log ponds, causes sedimentation.
- Shipping lanes (and OBM's) may cause accidental kills
- There is current government focus on increasing development in the fisheries sector. A push for development may mean that conservation/management efforts get sidelined



Threats

- Limited awareness of importance of seagrass and dugongs
- Marine pollution from land based activities affecting seagrass health.
- Local hunting for feasts/cultural events e.g. church ordinations, installation of traditional chiefs, Christmas festivals etc.



The Projects:

Project	What	Who	Where
SB2	National level awareness raising campaign to champion seagrass (& including other fisheries habitats) conservation	WorldFish	National level
SB3	Mapping critical seagrass fisheries habitats in Lau Lagoon, Solomon Islands	WorldFish	North Malaita, Malaita Province
SB4	Development of seagrass and dugong Locally Managed Marine Areas	SICCP	Marovo Lagoon, Kolombangara Island and Tetepare Island, Western Province. Vanikoro, Temotu Prov
SB5 + SB1	Strengthening provincial and national capacity for project implementation in the Solomon Islands	WorldFish	National level

SB2 National level awareness raising campaign to champion seagrass conservation

Activities	Outcomes
Develop educational material documenting importance of seagrass habitat management	Educational material available to be adapted for use
Delivery of materials and utilisation of different media for seagrass/fisheries habitats management (radio, festival events)	Increased level of public awareness on seagrass and dugong importance
Evaluation of effectiveness of social marketing campaign	Review of effectiveness of social marketing campaign to form part of lessons learned. This will provide opportunity to improve future social marketing programs
Lessons learned on seagrass and dugong management work in the Solomons developed and published	Lessons learned document shared regionally/internationally so that others may learn

Note: Proposal draft in progress

SB3 Mapping critical seagrass fisheries habitats in Lau Lagoon, Solomon Islands

Activities	Outcome
Participatory mapping of seagrass beds and rabbitfish habitats in North Malaita Lau Lagoon; Suafa bay; build capacity of communities and provincial and national government	Final map of seagrass in Lau Lagoon is produced, and the map is distributed to the Malaita Provincial government and MECDM. This will provide a baseline of information for the Province for proposed developments in the area
Documentation of indigenous knowledge on fauna (including dugongs) associated with seagrass beds in Lau Lagoon	The published stories are available and disseminated to the communities and made available to the public
WorldFish and Youth to do awareness of outcomes and participatory planning for management	
A policy brief to inform improved policy for management and development of lagoonal seagrass ecosystems	Govt is informed of project findings and recommendations through the Policy Brief. This will be prior presented to the National Facilitating Committee and Provincial govt

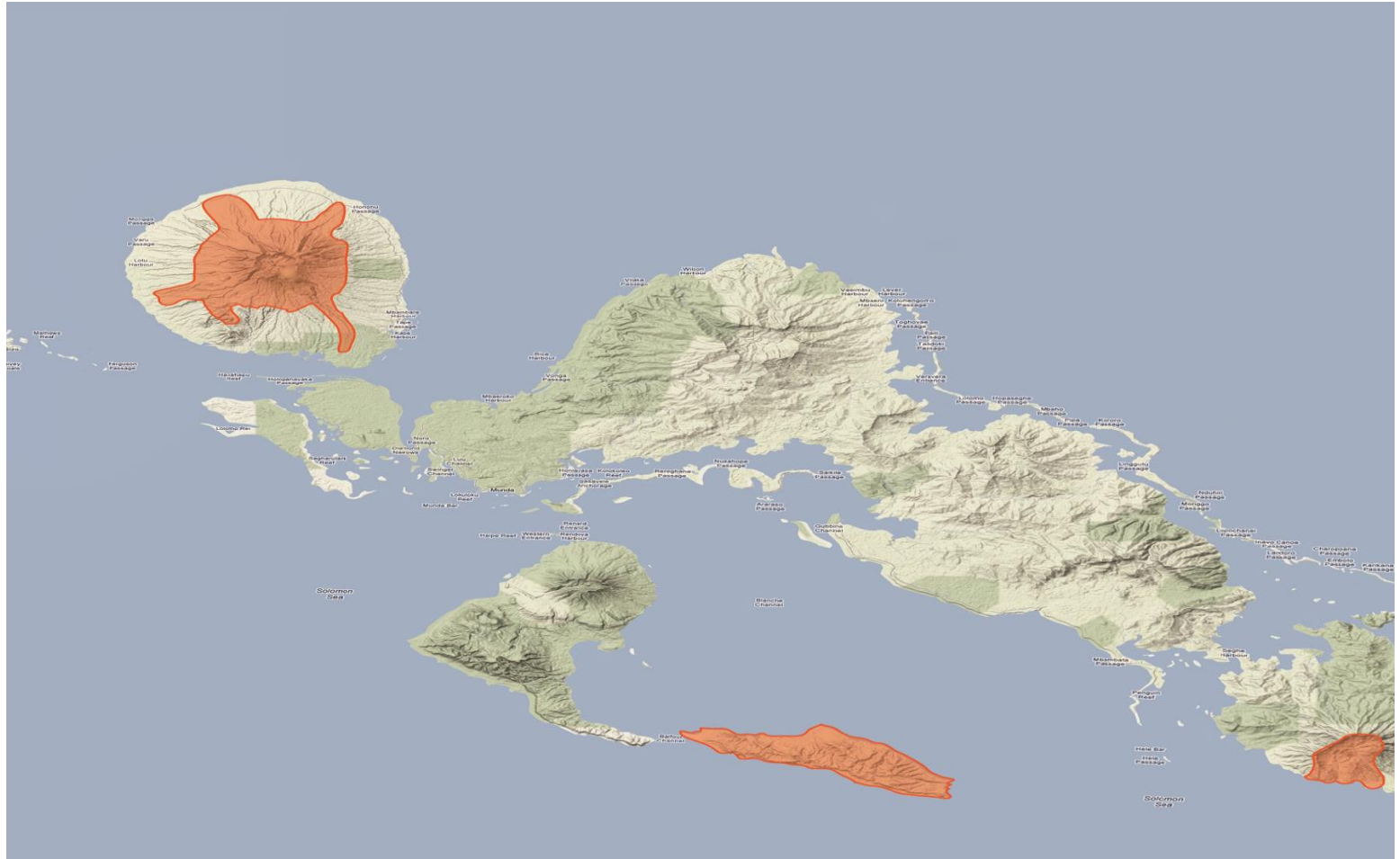
SB3 site, Lau Lagoon, North Malaita



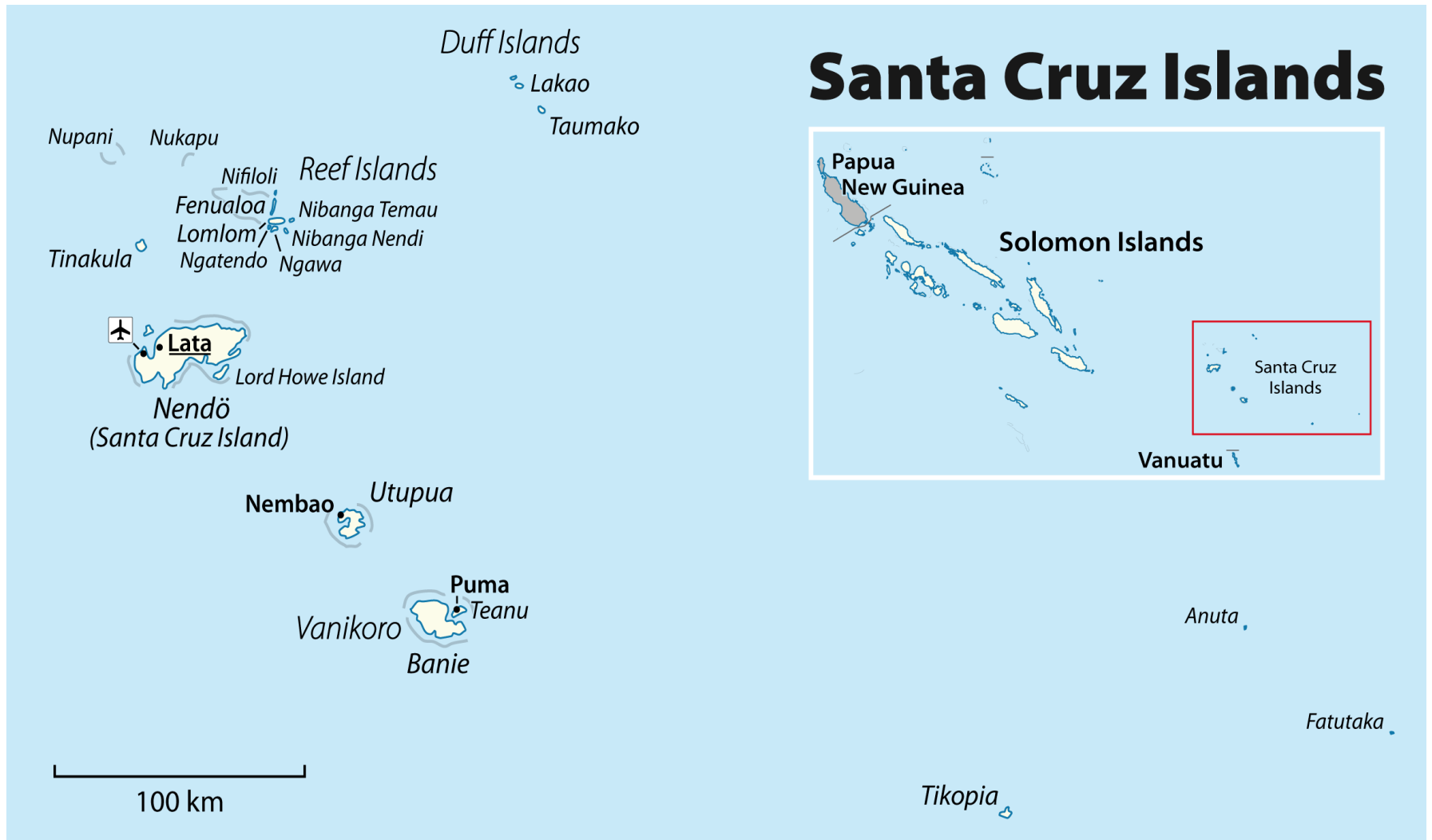
SB5 – Strengthening provincial and national capacity for project implementation in the Solomon Islands

Activities	Outcomes
Start up activities – courtesy meeting with Premier Malaita Province	Support from Malaita Provincial government is obtained for work to proceed
Planning meeting with implementing agencies and MECDM, MFMR	A compiled project work plan is developed for the whole of the project (SB1-SB5) and informs the development of the National Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Strategy National Facilitating Committee are able to meet regularly and provide progress reports and share information
Conduct National Facilitating Committee meetings	Partners/stakeholders informed of project progress
Support SICCP in preparing financial and technical reports where required	Implementing agencies submit their progress reports (including technical and financial) on time
Develop the Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Strategy	The Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Strategy is developed and progress is reviewed at the last year of implementation

SB4 sites: Western Province network sites - Marovo Lagoon, Kolombangara Island and Tetepare Island



Vanikoro Island, Temotu Province



SB4 – B4 U or Mi - DUGONG stap lo sea

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES
Conduct introductory trip to communities at Kolombangara, Roviana, Tetepare/Rendova, Marovo and Vanikoro and hold awareness sessions and gauge perceptions on the management and conservation of seagrass & dugong through LMMAs.	The selection of local communities willing to engage in setting up LMMAs
In consultation with communities determine if any existing governance structures exist, types of fishing activities, importance of certain habitats (e.g. seagrass) to fishing activities, community concerns or hopes about their fisheries and what the community's management goal is.	Improved understanding of the social fabric of each community that will enable resource management approaches to be tailored to each community
Where required, establish seagrass and dugong management committee to lead discussions (development) and implementing of dugong management plan.	A better understanding from the communities on what is involved in the formation of a LMMA and what is required for effective dugong and seagrass management
Hold management planning workshops that includes discussion on various approaches and tools available and how these can be used to help communities achieve their management goals.	Each community will have either have a stand-alone resource management committee or one that is a sub-group of an existing body
Development of LMMA management plan and implementation	Each community is implementing a management plan for their LMMA

SB4 – B4 U or Mi - DUGONG stap lo sea

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES
Assess whether or not management plan is working and adapt as necessary to improve effectiveness	Effective implementation and compliance with each management plan
Development of monitoring plans that support the objectives of seagrass. Dugong conservation within the LMMA plans	Communities are actively monitoring and assessing the achievement of their objectives
Purchase of relevant survey equipment (e.g. Seagrass Watch Kits)	CBOs will each have monitoring kits of their monitoring program
Conduct training workshops with goals of establishing of pool of trained individuals within each CBO that capable of carrying out monitoring activities	Enhanced local capacity for conservation of inshore resources
Active monitoring program taking place at each project location (except Vanikoro)	Data collected of the status of dugong and seagrass habitats used to inform

SB4 – B4 U or Mi - DUGONG stap lo sea

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES
Knowledge sharing & community feedback (awareness sessions)	A better informed community working together to improve ecological condition of seagrass and dugong populations
Work with National Partners (TNC, WCS, WFC, WWF) to identify and compile existing documentation (brochures, pamphlets, posters) promoting sustainable practices	Awareness Material List compiled based on consultation with in-country partners
Analyze existing documentation to identify knowledge gaps in seagrass and dugong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Awareness Kit with focus on seagrass and dugong conservation developed ➤ Awareness Campaign rolled out at respective field sites (Tetepare, Kolombangara, Marovo, Roviana & Vanikoro) ➤ School events (Speech Competition, Poems, Drama) for Honiara based schools completed

SB4 –B4 U or Mi - DUGONG stap lo sea

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES
Conduct social marketing campaigns on seagrass and dugong information at respective partner sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Schools events (Speech Competition, Poems, Drama for SICCP Western Network completed) ➤ 3-day Look and Learn Trip organized and executed for Partners within the SICCP Network at a selected site
Working with Partners (TNC, WFC, WWF, WFC) conduct awareness talks through Drama & Puppet plays at selected school proximity to study sites in Honiara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Awareness Talks completed at selected communities proximity to study sites completed ➤ Awareness Talks completed at selected schools in Honiara
Identify community champions within the SICCP network and National Partners to be advocates of seagrass and dugong conservation	Have completed list of community champions for seagrass and dugong conservation
Conduct Training of Trainers Workshop for these Community Champions on seagrass and dugong conservation	Training of Trainers Workshop completed

SB4 – B4 U or Mi - DUGONG stap lo sea

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES
Examine maps/satellite/aerial imagery of selected sites for potential seagrass and dugong conservation	Maps of potential sites for seagrass and dugong conservation produced
Design survey including questionnaire to collate traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) associated with seagrass and dugong threats and management	Compile and provide reports on seagrass and dugong population and sightings
Carry out LEK surveys within the SICCP Network for at least 4 sites to identify knowledge/sites/status	
Conduct rapid ecological assessments at selected sites for seagrass meadows and dugongs existence and populations	Produce Ecological Assessment Report on the sighting/status of seagrass beds and dugong population
Analyze data of surveyed area and provide recommendation for the selection of Locally Marine Managed Areas	At least 2 Locally Marine Managed sites are identified and confirmed

SB4 – B4 U or Mi - DUGONG stap lo sea

ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES
Working with MECDM and Partners, collate and store datasets obtained from seagrass and dugong surveys	Maps of potential sites for seagrass and dugong conservation produced
Working with National Partners, conduct a workshop to compile lessons learnt on awareness campaigns on seagrass and dugong information	Compile and provide reports on seagrass and dugong population and sightings
Identify and develop a Guide on Good Practices Guidelines for Dugongs and Seagrass Ecosystems at the surveyed	Guide on Good Practices for Dugongs and Seagrass developed
Provide recommendations to developing a Dugong Management Plan for the Solomon Islands	Report completed stating recommendations and submitted to MECDM & MFMR
Provide recommendations of seagrass and dugong conservation to the wider Solomon Islands audience through media avenues	Press releases and media interviews completed



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CHANGE FOR COMMUNITIES



Tangio Tumas!

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