

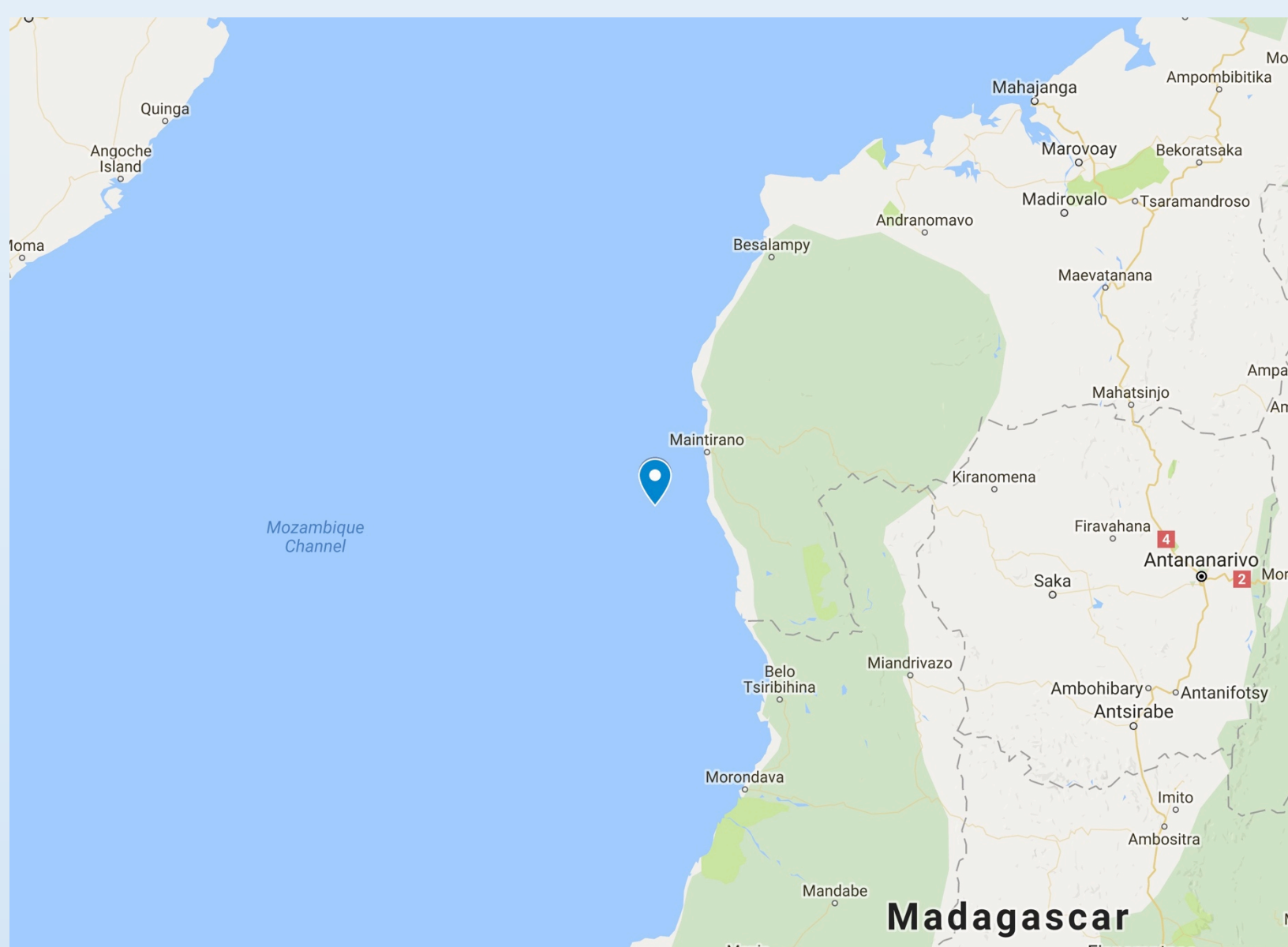
Project Summary

The Barren Isles LMMA is one of the few remaining areas of thriving marine biodiversity in the western Indian Ocean.

Off the west coast of Madagascar, the area is home to some of the region's healthiest marine ecosystems, spanning over 4,000 km² and supporting the livelihoods of more than 4,000 traditional Vezo fishers.

Shallow lagoons are home to abundant seagrass habitats, which play a key role in supporting the small-scale fisheries that underpin local livelihoods and food security.

The project is engaging LMMA managers and local community members directly in monitoring seagrass biodiversity, collecting information to guide management planning by the LMMA management committee to mitigate known threats to seagrass ecosystems and providing support to the LMMA management committee to implement a management plan, including permanent seagrass reserves and gear restrictions, to protect seagrasses and their dependent biodiversity.



Main Activities

Supporting community based monitoring and management of seagrass ecosystems within Madagascar's largest locally managed marine area (LMMA) by:

- Training community representatives in monitoring and participatory assessment of seagrass habitats and involving LMMA representatives in dissemination of information to communities.
- Engaging community representatives in developing LMMA management plans, including the establishment of seagrass reserves and local legislation to protect key marine resources and species.
- Collaborating with government authorities on monitoring, control and surveillance of local fisheries laws within the LMMA.
- Awareness raising campaigns targeting destructive fisheries within the LMMA.

Results

- Participatory assessment and mapping of seven islands of the BI archipelago completed.
- Habitat assessment and mapping contributed to wider discussions on identifying management measures in each village, including permanent and temporary reserves and traditional fishing sites.
- First set of management measures identified in each village, validated with local authorities and will be integrated in the LMMA management and zoning plan, including management measures to establish temporary or permanent reserves protecting habitats such as seagrass beds.
- Regional fisheries management plan is in place to provide increased protection to the LMMA, and surrounding areas.



Participatory assessments of seagrass habitats in the Barren Islands



The project boat carries the name of the management association



Community meeting to discuss management measures



Consultation in a coastal community



Seagrass mapping

Next Steps & Lessons Learned

Next steps:

- Participatory GPS mapping of the temporary and permanent marine reserves.
- Implementation of temporary reserves.
- Develop the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance programme to address infractions.
- Integrate LMMA management measures into local legislation with clearly defined sanctions.

Lessons learnt:

- Participatory assessment of seagrass habitats raised enthusiasm and buy-in among the community participants.
- Involving community leaders from another LMMA in information sessions allowed the project to overcome obstacles caused by false rumors and fear of the unknown. These fears have now been laid to rest.

About Our Organization

We rebuild tropical fisheries with coastal communities
Blue Ventures develops transformative approaches for catalysing and sustaining locally led marine conservation. We work in places where the ocean is vital to local cultures and economies, and are committed to protecting marine biodiversity in ways that benefit coastal people.