

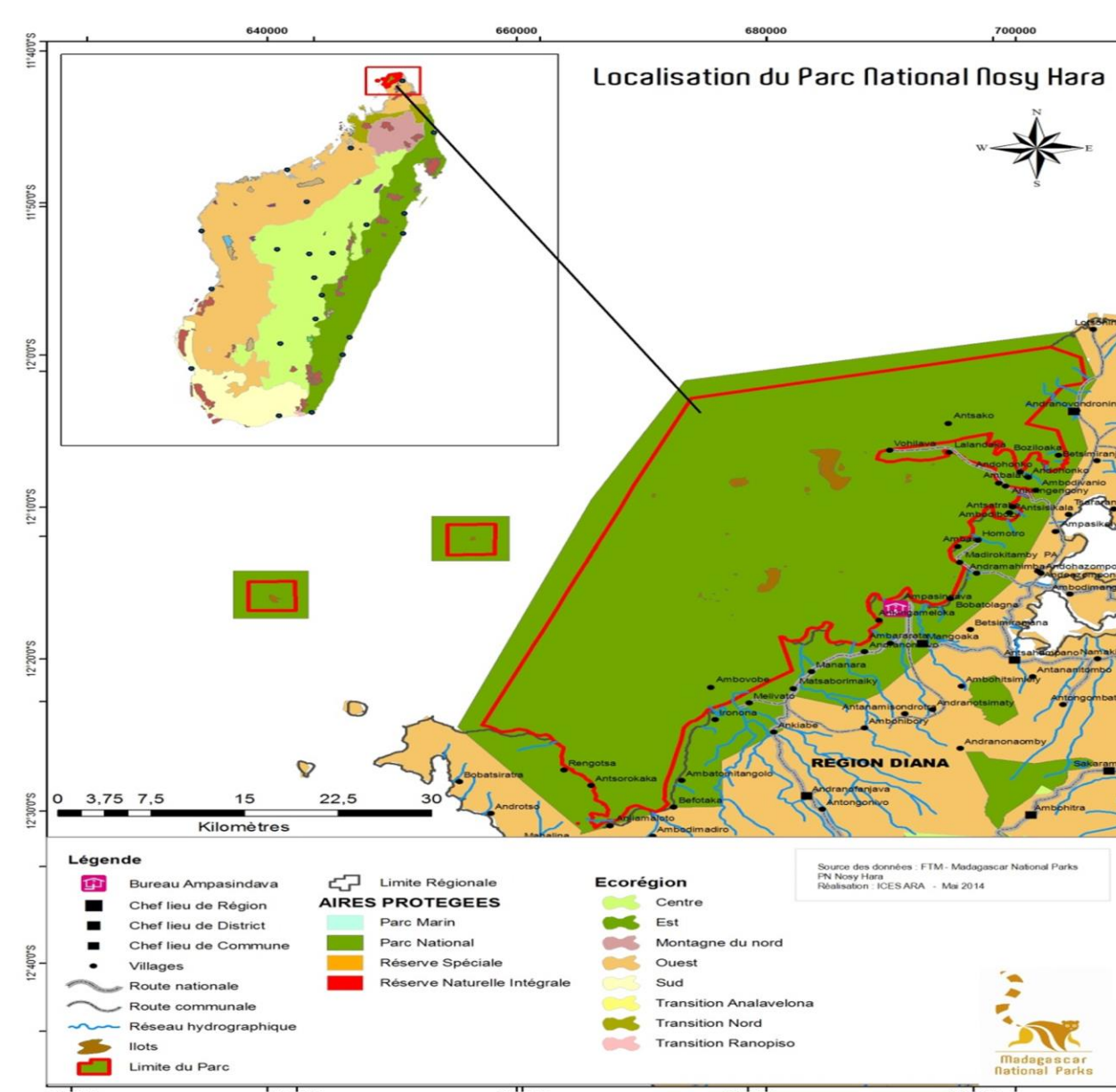


Using incentivized Environmental Stewardship to conserve dugongs and seagrass habitat at an identified national hotspot



Project Summary

The overall objective of this 3-year project was to conserve dugongs and their habitats at an identified national 'hotspot' through community capacity-building and provision of incentives (healthcare, education and enterprises). The project aimed to support and strengthen protection efforts in the Nosy Hara Marine Park, which has been identified as the site of highest priority for dugong conservation in the country through C3's previous research conducted from 2009-2014. MNP rangers were trained to monitor gillnet use and instruct fishers in the release of by caught dugongs and further training was provided for both rangers and local community members in scientific and community-based dugong and seagrass surveys, fisheries reporting, business development and communications and outreach. The project supported the ongoing activities and materials for the Junior Ecoguard clubs which continued to raise awareness of dugong habitats and wider marine conservation issues across the remote communities of the Nosy Hara Marine Park.



About Organization

Community Centred Conservation, or 'C3' was established in 2002 by an international group of marine environmental consultants in Palau, we are a young and dynamic non-profit organization with a unique grassroots approach and are active members of the World Conservation Union, IUCN.

We focus on small-scale capacity building, scientific research and environmental education projects that lead to direct benefits for local communities through the sustainable use of their natural environment. By providing opportunities for local people to develop and participate in these projects, we help to ensure the long-term sustainability of our work.

Results

Forty (40) Conservation Ambassadors, members of the community responsible for environmental management and outreach and about ninety fishers trained through the project in dugong observation reporting system, fisheries reporting system, outreach and communications and participated actively throughout the project.

The number of Junior Ecoguards increased to 100 members across Andranofanjava, Mangaoka, Andranovondronina villages in the Park. IEC materials were developed including factual postcards, t-shirts, a film, children's storybook and additions to the Junior Ecoguard Teacher Training Manual and Toolkit.

Dugong hotspots identified and mapped within the Marine Park and will be the focus of future research and high protection. An annual monitoring system for seagrass was established at 4 key dugong sites.

4 livelihoods established; 2 duck farms (in Andranomavo and Lalandaka) and a community restaurant, handicrafts and mangrove trail, managed by the women's association of Ampasindava.

Two schools refurbished with furniture and books. A travelling healthcare service (doctor and midwife) was provided to 9 communities across the Park. A project steering committee was created via the existing Comite Local de Pilotage (CLP) for Nosy Hara Marine Park to report infractions and observations of dugongs.



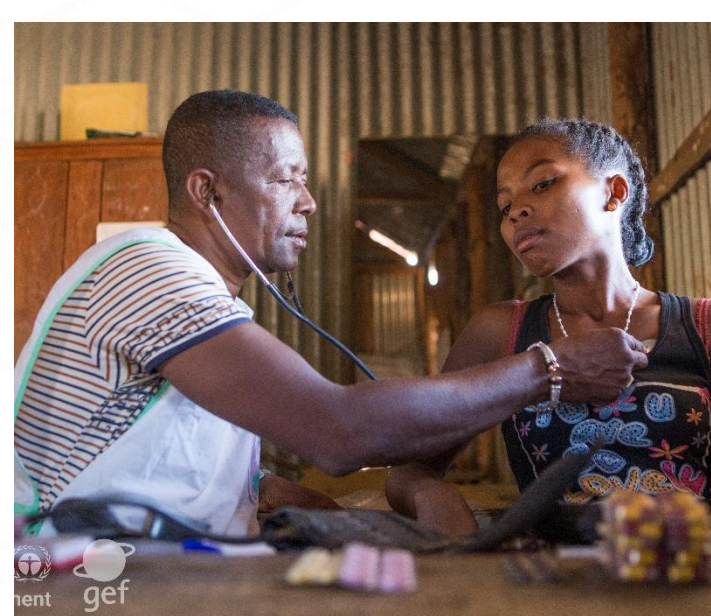
Conservation ambassadors and C3 team



Duck farm in Andranomavo



Awareness with JE



Medical services

Lessons Learned

Importance of Awareness raising and community engagement in conservation: CLP, Conservation Ambassador, Junior Ecoguard

Seagrass monitoring with the Seagrass Watch method, a scientific and non-destructive assessment and monitoring program for seagrass beds should be conducted annually

Providing alternatives to Support community-based conservation activities and alternative income generation to support the main livelihoods of the community

Spread awareness about the cultural aspects of dugong-human interactions in Madagascar through creation of a storybook in the local dialect

Repeat fisher interviews about dugongs to compare with baseline data (to update data)

Next Steps

Continue the efforts initiated by providing advice and support to the communities, especially with regards to their new enterprises

Engage key community members from Nosy Hara Marine Park in knowledge transfer as C3 extends its efforts into the far north and north eastern regions of Madagascar

Replicate this model of success across other dugong hotspots in northern Madagascar