



# Semaine internationale des zones humides Ramsar

Ateliers - Séminaire technique - Animations

20 - 25 mai 2024

Ile de La Réunion - France



# “MOBILIZATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN WETLANDS RESTORATION OPERATIONS”

**Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment  
(MACCE)**

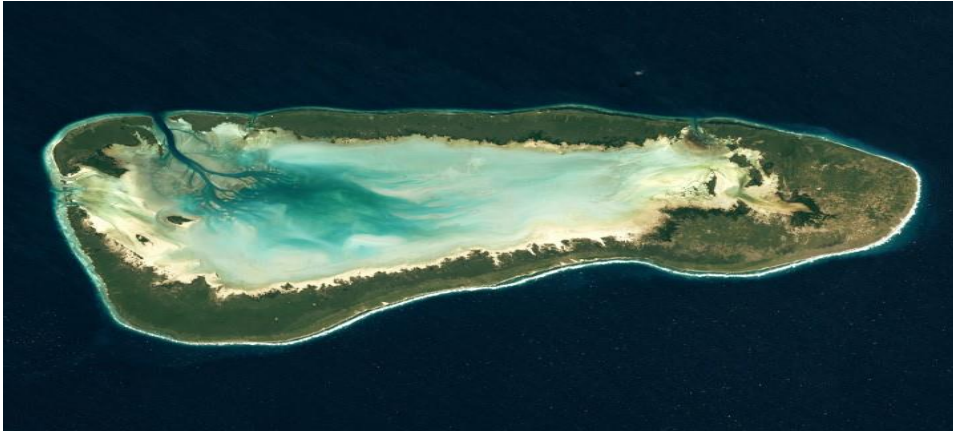
**Presented by: Jean-Claude Labrosse**

**Ramsar National Focal Point**

**Seychelles**



# Ramsar sites of Seychelles



**Aldabra coastal Wetlands - World Heritage Site -  
43,000 ha**



**Port Launay coastal wetlands**



**Mare Aux Cochons high altitude wetlands**

# Introduction – General overview and vulnerability of Seychelles

- ❑ **The coastline of the Seychelles granitic islands are of two basic types: granitic coastlines where waves break directly onto granite rocks and steeply sloping inselbergs and; coralline coastlines backed by coastal plains and fronted by fringing coral reefs (of either old or recent construction)**
- ❑ **On the coralline coastlines, the fringing reef crests break waves sufficiently to enable settlement and development on the coastal plains. Between the reef crest and shoreline, sheltered lagoons may be present, backed by fine sand beaches.**
- ❑ **A large part of the coastal areas consist of rocky beaches and mud flats, and the rest consists of stabilized beaches.**



# **The Roles and contributions of Civil Societies and the local Communities in Environmental activities**

- Encourage and promote community participation in environmental activities from grassroot to elite level throughout the country.**
- Support Government projects and programs through a collaborative approach to promote sustainable environmental management**
- Encourage/promote community participation in the decision-making process in environmental matters through an advocacy platform.**
- Provide technical and financial support to Government and the Community through various sources.**

# Structural setting enabling civil Societies and Community participation

## Public Education and Community Outreach - (PECO-MACCE)

- Promote nationwide environmental education and awareness through programs and projects.**
- Organise Theme Days**
- Support Schools and other institutions in promoting environmental education.**
- Capacity building activities - Eco-warriors - Empower local Communities**



Training institutions staff ways to conduct propagation of mangrove and other coastal plants in the laboratory (UCEE-University of Seychelles)



Hands-on training of institutions staff on ways to pot mangroves

Hands-on training: students learn how to prepare cuttings for vegetative propagation



# Seychelles Parks & Gardens Authority (SPGA)



A parastatal organisation which manages Seychelles' designated marine and terrestrial national parks and gardens.

**Mission - Ensuring that the protected areas and gardens of Seychelles are managed for the benefit of all.**

## Research and Monitoring

**Curieuse Island: Managed by SPGA, home to eight wetlands.**

- **Conducted a baseline wetland assessment**
- **Annual monitoring system to be implemented.**



**Mare Aux Cochons Wetland: Located in Morne Seychellois National Park. A rare high-ground freshwater wetland, designated a Ramsar site on 02/02/2010.**

- **Future baseline assessment planned for Mare Aux Cochons.**

# Seychelles Parks & Gardens Authority (SPGA)



## Education and Awareness:

- Installed information boards.
- Shared information on social media.

## Community Engagement:

- Organized mangrove planting activities with schools and organizations.
- Conducted invasive species removal (e.g., fern, cocoplum, coconut trees, casuarina trees).
- Clean-up activities.





# Local Environmental NGOs

**Capacity Build  
through training  
leaders/trainers**

**Source of  
funding for  
community  
projects**

**Implement  
rehabilitation/restor  
ation projects**

**Provide  
technical  
support for case  
studies/research**

**Support Government  
Projects/programs**

**Advocacy of  
national policies  
and regulations**



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# Nature Seychelles

- ❑ A pioneer in conservation and management actions.
- ❑ A champion in restoration of mangroves and other associated ecosystems
- ❑ Custodian of a Sanctuary that now **attracts waders** and **migrant birds** as well as harbouring native aquatic biodiversity.
- ❑ A **site for education** and **awareness raising** on mangroves

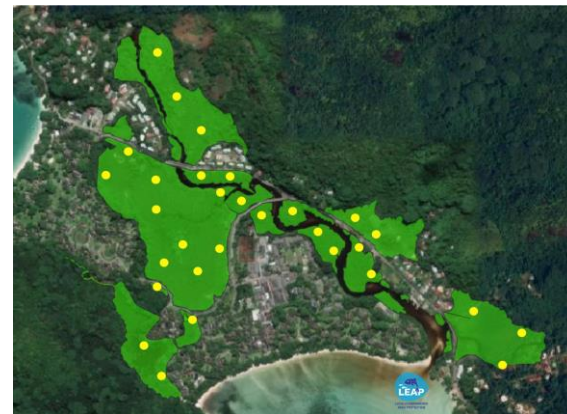


Ramsar ecological **surveys** and training

**Co-management committee established** to participate in wetland conservation activities

**LEAP Junior Club mangrove education & awareness**

**Donated environmental centre to school to encourage exploration of mangroves**



# Eco-Schools

- ❑ Established since 1993 through pilot project
- ❑ Influenced by two Policies
  - ❖ *Education for a new Society*
  - ❖ *The Environment Management Plan - 2019*
- ❑ Compulsory program in all State schools (Private Schools encourage to join)
- ❑ Cultivating and culture of sustainable environment practices



# Wildlife Clubs

- ❑ **Founded in 1994 by Nature Seychelles with support from BirdLife International to engage children and youth in conservation actions.**
- ❑ **Currently active in most schools with over 600+ members.**
- ❑ **Objective - To increase young people's knowledge of Seychelles' biodiversity and mobilize actions for conservation.**
- ❑ **Very active in wetlands restoration activities.**



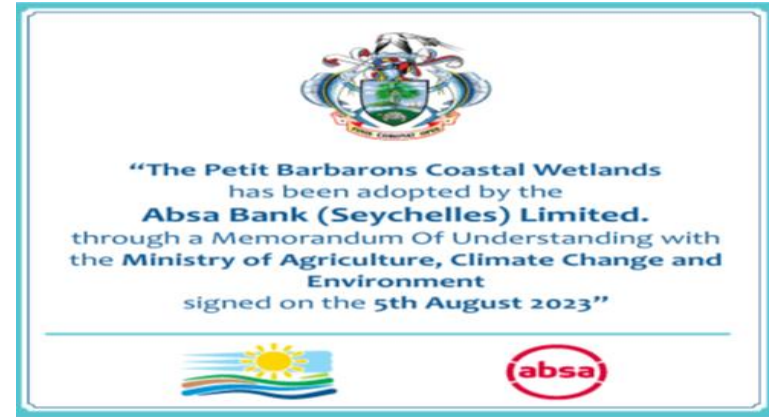
# Community-Based Organisations - CBOs

- ❑ **Has been in existence since 1990s focusing on Community-based programs and projects**
- ❑ **Very influential in the local communities providing a platform to participate in the decision-making process.**
- ❑ **Generating greater interest among individuals and groups in the Districts**
- ❑ **Safeguarding traditional and cultural values of the Communities**



# Public-Private Partnership

- ❑ **Support Government Programs/projects**
- ❑ **Adoption of Wetlands through MoUs**
- ❑ **Support/host Theme Days events**
- ❑ **Promote sustainable use of wetlands and support Communities**
- ❑ **Promote Eco-Tourism**



# The Strategic Approach

- ❑ **Training of leaders**
- ❑ **Promote Collaboration and partnership agreements**
- ❑ **Organise outdoor activities with various groups**
- ❑ **Focus on a door-to-door approach**
- ❑ **Incentivised partnership/recognition of contributions of partners.**
- ❑ **Policies and regulations**





# Achievements

- ❑ **Increased commitments from Private Businesses - (signing of MoUs)**
- ❑ **Increased support in wetlands restoration activities**
- ❑ **Greater Community engagement and ownership - (being part of the decision-making process)**
- ❑ **Improve awareness among local communities**



**PORT LAUNAY-PORT GLAUD MANGROVE MANAGEMENT  
PLAN 2023 –2028**



# Achievements- Conti..

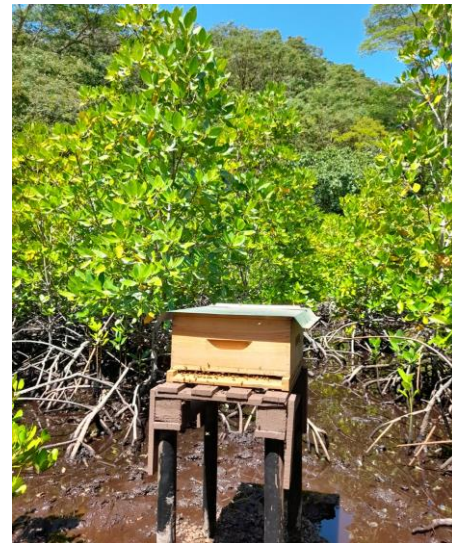
- ❑ **Wider mobilization in schools including post-secondary institutions**
- ❑ **Programs embedded in Schools Curriculum**
- ❑ **Brought awareness to a greater scale, (Media, Policy-makers, Legislative)**
- ❑ **Contributing to achieve NDC targets**



***- Committed to protecting its Blue Carbon Ecosystems, i.e. at least 50% of its seagrass and mangrove ecosystems by 2025 and 100% by 2030.***

# Achievements- Private partnership

- ❑ **Increase in the number of NGOs/CBOs**
- ❑ **Increase funding for restoration projects/programs through Donor Funding**
- ❑ **Greater capacity building - (Community empowerment)**
- ❑ **Restored connectivity between ecosystems, (more than 550,000 Sqm. restored, more than 10,000 mangroves planted)**



# 4. Achievements- Restored associated ecosystem

- ❑ **Providing stability for our coastal areas - restored degraded coral reefs - Started in 2010**
- ❑
- ❑ **25,000 nursery grown coral colonies were transplanted on a 5,000m<sup>2</sup> of degraded reefs with a very high survival rate.**
- ❑ **Farmed 40,000 from 34 species**
- ❑ **New scientific techniques produced 5,000 heat resilient coral per year.**



# Challenges

- ❑ **Impacts of Climate Change**
- ❑ **Pressure from Development, (Urban expansion, industries, agriculture, tourism)**
- ❑ **Need to improve coordination between Government entities**
- ❑ **Need more support for capacity building**
- ❑ **Resistance to change by few local communities**



# Challenges Ramsar site -Aldabra



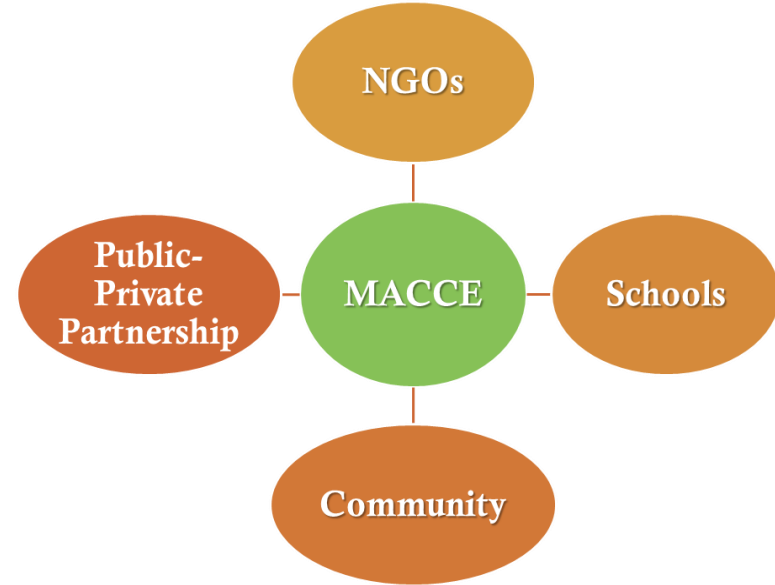
**Mobilization of volunteers for clean-up works on Aldabra - (SIF, Foreign volunteers, Universities)**



# Opportunities

## Opportunities exist in;

- Improve national and regional networking on wetlands restoration practices**
- Strengthen national policies through a collaborative approach involving all stakeholders**
- Access to Donor funding through local NGOs/CBOs**
- Improve the country's resilience through capacity building at Civil Society and Community level.**



# Opportunities - conti..

- ❑ **The expansion of NGOs/CBOs that are focusing on Climate Change mitigation and adaptation approaches**
- ❑ **Involvement of private sectors in the implementation and financing of restoration activities.**
- ❑ **Availability and increase of Donor Funding**





# Way forward

- ❑ **Strengthen institutional frameworks**
- ❑ **Improve incentives/recognitions to voluntary individuals/groups**
- ❑ **Improve ridge-to-reef approach in restoration activities**
- ❑ **Promote and strengthen stakeholders' involvement**



**THANK YOU**



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