



Solomon Islands Government

**MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES
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Solomon Islands**

SOLOMON ISLANDS COUNTRY REPORT

COMMUNITY-BASED COASTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT REGIONAL SEMINAR

MELANESIAN HOTEL, PORT VILA VANUATU

13TH – 16TH OCTOBER 2014

1. OVERVIEW OF COASTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

The coastal marine environment of Solomon Islands covers more than 5,750 Km² of coral reefs, extensive seagrass beds and mangrove forests which are important for its fisheries sector. These important ecosystems have supported the rural populace which accounts for approx. 90% of the total population for ages in their daily subsistence and economic aspirations. But like other Pacific Island countries, communities in the Solomon Is. have their own confronting issues to deal with regarding the management of their important marine resources. Some of the major issues include increasing population, climate change and developing markets.

In order to have access to sufficient and productive marine resources now and into the future, sustainable management of these precious resources is of paramount. Like other parts of the world, population increase, growing and new commercial markets and unsustainable fishing practices (e.g. destructive fishing, or harvesting of undersized marine species) are a concern to the sustainability of the fisheries in Solomon Islands. When referring to fisheries, not only a particular species or stock of interest is considered but also their broader biological and ecological processes as well as their related socio-economic processes (i.e. interaction of people with the fishery).

In the endeavor to sustainably use, manage and protect the natural resources of the country especially that of the coastal marine environment for this matter, the Government of Solomon Islands is promoting and preferred **Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)** –as the way forward (*SI-CTI NPoA*).

THE MANDATE:

Management and Development of Fisheries.

The objective of fisheries management and development in Solomon Islands shall be to ensure the long-term conservation and the sustainable utilisation of the fishery resources of Solomon Islands for the benefit of the people of Solomon Islands (Fisheries Act 1998).

Inshore Fisheries Strategic Plan, 2010 (recently reviewed)

- ***Communities are the best managers of their natural resources***

COMMUNITY-BASED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (CBRM)

Community based resource management is the management of natural resources (e.g. forests and associate products, fish, coral reefs) that is driven by, or is occurring at the community level. It incorporates specific management rules as well as governance systems that impact the way management occurs. In Solomon Islands CBRM is a term used to describe different community based management approaches including locally managed marine area (LMMA), EAFM, and CBFM (***CBRM in Solomon Islands: A Facilitator's Guide Manual, WFC, 2013***). LMMA is the most common form of marine resource management used by communities throughout the country. An LMMA has the advantage of being able to accommodate the different needs of a community for access to their resources while also carrying out management.

During a recently held workshop (3rd – 4th July, 2014) on CBRM Mapping, the country has recorded a total of 148 sites that are actively doing coastal resource management (***CT Atlas: www.coraltriangleinitiative.org***).

WHY CBRM APPROACH?

Community-based approach is preferred in the Solomon Islands due to two important reasons namely; ***Customary Marine Tenure System*** and ***lack of financial and human resources*** at the government level.

Customary marine tenure system is recognized by the National Constitution of Solomon Islands and accounts for greater than ninety percent (90%) of its inshore coastal areas, islands and islets. Under the system specific groups of people have primary rights to access and use marine resources and that these rights are in principle exclusionary, transferable and enforceable. On this customary tenure, community-based approaches use ***rights*** as the foundation of efforts to manage resources. As it is the current practice, by basing CBRM on the structure and systems that are already in existence for community governance (e.g. customary tenure, chiefly system, etc.), management is believed and anticipated to be respected, complied with and fit that community's particular situation.

To further add, financial and human resources at the government level to address marine resource management issues and enforce legislation in rural and remote communities continue to be lacking. Whilst the government is taking steps to address these capacity shortcomings, it is recognized that the geographic stretch of Solomon Islands still presents a big challenge to centralized management (i.e. management at the national level – top-down approach).

Benefits of a community-based approach include:

- ✓ Low ongoing costs
- ✓ Can be undertaken with little prior data

- ✓ Draws strongly on traditional knowledge and gives greater ownership and decision making powers to resource owners
- ✓ Recognizes that Solomon Islanders are the owners and the custodians of their resources
- ✓ Empowers community structures and institutions
- ✓ Can potentially be undertaken by communities themselves with little or no outside support.

PARTNERS IN CBRM (SILMMA NETWORK)

The Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources is not on its own in the management for sustainable utilization of its Fishery sector. Its important partners include:

- I. Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM)
- II. The Nature Conservancy (TNC - SI),
- III. WorldFish Centre (WFC -SI),
- IV. Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF),
- V. Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI)
- VI. University of Queensland (UQ) Research Institution
- VII. Tetepare Descendant Association (TDA) - Community-based Organisation
- VIII. Roviana Conservation Foundation (RCF)- Community-based Organisation
- IX. LMMA Regional Network LMMA Network

Others: Live and Learn, Solomon Islands Community Conservation Partnership (SICCP), Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL), Ministry of Forestry

SILMMA network (Central Information Hub) support

- Coordination
- Information sharing
- Awareness raising
- **NGO/National Government support**
 - Technical expertise
 - Legislature/Policies/Strategies
 - Financial
 - Awareness raising

- **Community Participation**

- Formulation of LMMA (or CBFM) plans

2. PROBLEMS/CONSTRAINTS OF COASTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

a) Communities

- Perceived conflict between development and management objectives
- Customary tenure system e.g. Disputes

b) Sustainability of finance for management

- Continuity of NGO presence at sites

c) Compliance and enforcement

d) Poor communication

3. EXISTING PROJECTS/PROGRAMS FOR COASTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- REVIEW OF CURRENT NATIONAL/PROVINCIAL LAWS (e.g. Fisheries Act, 1978, Provincial fisheries Ordinances) and STRATEGY FORMULATION (Solomon Islands Inshore and Provincial Fisheries Management and Development Strategy – *draft*) – **MFMR/SILMMA partners**
- AWARENESS OUTREACH PROGRAM ON NATIONAL LEGISLATIONS (e.g. Protected Areas Act 2010) (**MECDM**)
- SEAWEED PROGRAM (**MFMR**)
- FAD PROGRAM (**MFMR/WWF/WFC**)
- HAPI FISH PROJECT (**MFMR /WWF – Data collection, Fish markets**)
- COMMUNITY-BASED FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (**MFMR/SILMMA partners**)
- INTEGRATED COASTAL MANAGEMENT (RIDGE TO REEF APPROACH) - **TNC**
- TURTLE CONSERVATION PROGRAM – **SILMMA NETWORK partners**
- CBRM RESOURCE MAPPING PROJECT – **MECDM/TNC**
- EXPANDING THE REACH PROJECT – **MFMR/SILMMA partners**
- ESTABLISHMENT OF PROVINCIAL INFORMATION HUBS - **MFMR/SILMMA partners**
- NETWORKING

I. Locally Managed Marine Areas Network (Regional Level)

- II. Solomon Islands Locally Managed Marine Areas Network (National Level)
- III. Provincial Networking (Choiseul, Isabel, Central Islands Provinces)
- IV. Community Networking e.g. Roviana Conservation Foundation

- NETWORK DESIGN

- I. Community-based design (Fish for kaikai, income generation, restocking)
- II. NGO-based design (Biodiversity/species specific e.g. Turtle Conservation)
- III. Governance-based design (Ridge to reef, Provincial Natural Resource Management Plans)

FUNDING AGENCIES:

Solomon Islands National Government (SIG),

US Government (US-Aid),

Australian Government (Aus-Aid),

Asian Development Bank (ADB),

New Zealand Government (NZ-Aid) and others

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