

MFF Cambodia

An Overview



An elevated walkway in the mangrove forest of Peam Krasop Wildlife Sanctuary in Koh Kong, Cambodia. Photo: © Steven Bernacki/IUCN

About Mangroves for the Future

Mangroves for the Future (MFF) is a partnership-based initiative promoting investment in coastal ecosystems for sustainable development. MFF works towards achieving the vision of a healthier, more prosperous and secure future for all coastal communities.

MFF has adopted mangroves as its flagship ecosystem in recognition of the important role that mangrove forests played in reducing the impact of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, and the severe effect on coastal livelihoods caused by mangrove loss and degradation. However MFF embraces all coastal ecosystems, including coral reefs, estuaries, lagoons, wetlands, beaches, and seagrass beds. Using an ecosystem-based, or “reef-to-ridge” approach, MFF helps coastal managers and communities to adopt, and benefit from, more integrated management of coastal resources and the ecosystem processes that support them.

MFF in Cambodia

Cambodia is currently an MFF member country. On 26 June 2013, the National Strategy and Action Plan for Cambodia was signed and approved by the Senior Minister, Minister of Environment of the Royal Government of Cambodia.

The Executive Board for MFF in Cambodia was established on 15 June 2012 and approved by the Ministry of Environment of Cambodia on 12 October 2012. The Executive Board is responsible for coordinating MFF in Cambodia and for developing and implementing coastal management initiatives at the national and sub-national levels. It provides a forum to foster improved dialogue, planning and decision-making between the different government agencies and non-governmental organizations involved in coastal management and development within the context of MFF and in relation to broader issues and concerns of coastal ecosystem management in Cambodia.

Coastal Cambodia

Cambodia has its 440 kilometer-long coastline scattered with mangrove forests, coral reefs, seagrass beds and other coastal ecosystems which play a significant role in ecosystem productivity and to society. These ecosystems are fundamental to the livelihoods of millions of Cambodians and to the nation as a whole. Not only do they perform an essential role in supplying people with fish, a staple food rich in protein for Cambodians, but are also vital to coastal protection, tourism and biodiversity. The conservation and management of mangroves, coral reefs and seagrass beds are therefore vital to the sustainable management of coastal and marine fisheries and to ensure Cambodia’s people continue to gain economic, cultural and nutritional benefit from the resources.

Cambodia’s coastal and marine areas are biodiversity rich areas that have significant conservation value including marine mammals such as the dugong, marine dolphins, and whales, as well as marine turtles, crustaceans, mollusks, and corals. Natural ecosystems of mangroves, coral reefs and seagrass beds all provide a wide range of services to Cambodia—fishing for critical food resources, coastal protection, tourism and biodiversity. They also provide important natural habitats essential to sustaining the marine fisheries of Cambodia. Destruction of these habitats results in loss of breeding, spawning, nursery and feeding grounds for many marine species, leading to a reduction in fishstocks and other coastal and marine fauna and flora and to serious impacts on human well being.

Cambodia’s Coasts are facing issues due to:

- Land conversion for agriculture or aquaculture
- Over exploitation of fisheries
- Urban development
- Sand mining and dredging
- Destruction and degradation of coastal habitats
- Climate change



Mangrove Forests in Koh Kong, Cambodia. Photo: © Steven Bernacki/IUCN

MFF Cambodia at Work



Two local community members help to plant thousands of new mangrove seedlings in Toul Korki, Cambodia. Photo: © Veth Sonim/IUCN

Koh Kong province is home to the largest areas of mangrove forests in Cambodia, covering over 62,000 hectares, which provide local communities with substantial direct and indirect benefits such as provision of food and other non-timber forest products, carbon sequestration, as well as water, pollution, and erosion regulation. Additionally, mangrove forests provide vital habitat for fish, which are a vital food source for other marine life such as marine dolphins.

The Mangroves for the Future-Small Grant Facility Project (MFF-SGF) initiative has been active in Koh Kong Province since 2014 and aims to build local community resilience by helping them sustainably manage, conserve and restore coastal ecosystems and improve local communities' resource dependent livelihoods.

Planting Mangroves in Toul Korki

In collaboration with the Department of Environment (DoE), Peam Krasop Wildlife Sanctuary (PKWS), and local authorities in Toul Korki Commune, and funded by the MFF-SGF project, Toul Korki Community Protected Area (CPA) planted over 25,000 mangrove seedlings over 4 hectares in May of 2016. In total 67 participants joined the mangrove planting at Toul Korki CPA, including participants from both the DoE and rangers from PKWS.



(Left) A farmer feeds her chicken (middle) a farmer inspects his long bean crop, (right) a drip irrigation system designed to reduce water usage. Photo: © RHRD



A farmer shows off his manure-powered biogas reactor. Photo: © Steven Bernacki/IUCN

Sustainable Farming Practices

Through the "Sustainable Livelihood Through Improving Ecosystem in Mangrove Area (SLIEMA)" project, MFF-SGF grantee Research and Human Resource Development (RHRD) is helping to reduce overfishing in the sanctuary by working with the local community to make farming livelihoods more lucrative and sustainable. In April 2016, RHRD organized a series of trainings with the aim of providing solutions to the challenges facing the community with regard to vegetable and chicken farming practices. Some of the techniques taught included a drip irrigation that saves water and increases yields, and chicken de-worming practices that greatly increase livestock survival.

Reducing Logging in the Mangrove Forrest

An MFF-funded project in Koh Kong Province helped install manure-powered biogas reactors on 12 local farms. These biogas reactors reduce the need for locals to get firewood and timber from the nearby mangrove forests, which are commonly used for charcoal. Additionally, the manure is a re-usable farm byproduct that saves families \$2.50 USD a day in fuel costs and also the time spent having to get fuel. Simple solutions such as these are helping local families to focus their energies on profitable and sustainable practices that help preserve and rehabilitate coastal ecosystems in Cambodia.

Get Involved!

To obtain more information on MFF, or to learn how you, your organization, project or community can join in, please contact us: secretariat@mangrovesforthefuture.org

Visit our website: www.mangrovesforthefuture.org/countries/members/cambodia

MFF Institutional Partners

