

MALDIVES STATUS REPORT 1 DECEMBER 2006

Coordination:

FAO has collaborated with many agencies operating in-country, such as UNDP, the Australian Red Cross and the Canadian Red Cross, along with various Government Ministries such as the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Marine Resources.

Fisheries:

FAO emergency post-tsunami support to the fisheries sector targeted 625 different size vessels, reaching about 5 600 fishers' households. The assistance, worth over US\$1.3 million, was provided in the form of fishing gear, sea safety equipment and refrigeration capacity.

In terms of technical assistance, FAO assisted in verifying damage assessment surveys, advised on boat and engine repairs, boat construction and the development of the commercial fleet and oversaw contracts for replacing the inshore fishing vessels and 85-foot vessels. FAO has also facilitated training in the use and application of fiberglass reinforced plastic (FRP technology); undertook a fisheries sector analysis and prepared elements of a fisheries rehabilitation strategy; and assessed the damage to the cottage fish processing sub-sector and the needs for improved post-harvest facilities and drafted a post-harvest fisheries development plan including proposals for four ice plants.

FAO also provided assistance through capacity building. The Faculty of Engineering Technology at the Maldives College of Higher Education was assisted through prepared course materials and technical assistance to conduct training courses in fiberglass reinforced plastic boat-building and repair technology.

Agriculture:

FAO assistance to victims of the tsunami in the agriculture sector benefited 4 010 households comprising about 24 000 people in 51 islands across the archipelago. These farming families received a complete agricultural kit comprising vegetable seed, compost, organic manure, inorganic fertilizer and agricultural tools/implements. A total of 300 000 seedlings have also been distributed. An important feature of this intervention was FAO's collaboration with UNDP Male in the replacement of lost assets, including tools and other inputs.

In terms of technical assistance, FAO undertook a soil assessment mission, developed guidelines for action in dealing with salinity and facilitated staff training. The Organization also surveyed the water table, analyzed the fresh water lenses in selected tsunami-affected islands and advised on follow-up action. An assessment was conducted on the pest/disease status of the nurseries contracted for supplying planting material, and FAO advised on the establishment of a plant quarantine protection system and conducted basic awareness training to selected staff of relevant Government institutions.

FAO also provided assistance through capacity building. The Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Marine Resources (MFAMR) staff were trained to use and interpret results from salinity meters. Two Customs and one MFAMR staff benefited from a one-week training attachment to the Sri Lanka Quarantine authorities to observe passenger/goods handling procedures at ports and airports. A two-week training workshop on plant quarantine/plant protection was conducted for 20 persons drawn from staff of MFAMR, Customs, Ports Authority, Port Health, Airports and Immigration.

Forestry:

FAO assessed the status of the forestry sector and developed proposals for incorporation in a regional post-tsunami forestry rehabilitation project, which will be completed in June 2007. The ongoing activities in Maldives include:

- Restoration and rehabilitation of tsunami-affected forests with the participation of local community.
- Strengthening the management of existing and rehabilitated forests as green shields against natural calamities including tsunamis.
- Promoting agro-forestry using multiple-use and amenity trees in tsunami-affected islands for sustainable livelihoods.
- Cultivating timber species used in boat building and for firewood to reduce the current pressure on forest resources.
- Training and capacity building of stakeholders in sustainable forest management.
- Setting up of a community nursery for timber tree production.
- Planting of over 3 000 timber species.
- Preparation of the first draft forestry policy for the country.
- Preparation of the first book of trees for Maldives.