

ANTONGIL BAY SEASCAPE



INTRODUCTION

MaMaBay – comprising Makira Natural Park, Masoala Natural Park, and Antongil Bay - encompasses more than one million hectares of land and sea in the northeastern region of Madagascar. Antongil Bay is Madagascar's largest bay and is home to mangroves and coral reef habitats, as well as 13 marine mammal species, three marine turtle species, and 140 fish species (including 19 shark species).

In 2013 UNESCO identified the site as a potential World Heritage Site. Concurrently, 150,000 subsistence farmers and fishers living in 95 villages along 200 km of the coastline rely on these waters to sustain their livelihoods. Overexploitation due to increasing human population, destructive fishing practices, and lack of compliance with fishing gear restrictions are driving degradation of coastal habitat and the bay's fisheries, including a loss of coral reefs and declines in fish and invertebrate abundance.

In Antongil Bay, WCS's community-based fisheries management programme is implemented in partnership with the community-led platform – PCDDBA: Committee for the Sustainable Development of Antongil Bay. Since 2009, WCS has assisted in creation and management of 26 locally managed marine areas (LMMAs), and in the development of the first seascape scale coastal fisheries co-management plan in Madagascar (Antongil Bay Fisheries Co-management Plan, or ABFMP that was officially formalized by the Government of Madagascar in December 2014) that incorporates a community-based mechanism for enforcement of fishing rules.

WCS'S GOAL AND ACTIVITIES IN THE SITE:

The WCS program in Antongil Bay aims to increase resources and economic benefits from small-scale fisheries for coastal people, through improved management capacities, engagement of communities in natural resource management, and support to government to reduce overexploitation, illegal fishing and use of destructive fishing equipment. WCS and its partners aim to achieve these by implementing activities under the following six pillars:

Milestones:

- **2007 onwards:** 26 locally managed marine areas (LMMAs) were established around Antongil Bay
- **2008:** development of the first community-driven sustainable 'ridge to reef' resource management plan for the 32 municipalities bordering the bay
- **2013:** catch monitoring and ecological surveys started in the Bay
- **2014:** The Antongil Bay Fisheries Management Plan was formally adopted by the Government giving access rights to local fishers in LMMAs in Antongil Bay
- **2014:** The PCDDBA was awarded the Equator Prize
- **2016:** The Federation of fishermen in Antongil Bay was formally accepted by the Ministry of Fisheries like partner for the Fisheries Management Plan implementation.
- **2017:** Training in SMART and rollout across six LMMAs
- **2017:** First BRUV surveys and sharks catch monitoring surveys

1. Improve engagement and accountability of all stakeholders in ABFMP implementation by organizing annual meetings of the ABFMP Steering Committee and implementing priority decisions from the ABFMP such as the delivery of fishing licenses for small-scale fishers and the implementation of measures to reduce the bycatch of shark species within small-scale fisheries.

2. Strengthen the capability of coastal communities to more effectively manage the network of 26 LMMAs and surrounding waters through capacity building activities including formal training in administration, financial management, leadership, fisheries management and enforcement; and organization of debates and networking between LMMA representatives and local authorities.

3. Raise knowledge and awareness about existing fishing regulations, unsustainability of destructive fishing practices and benefits of LMMAs through learning visits for fishers at the newly inaugurated WCS-managed environmental campus in Maroantsetra, exchange visits to LMMA sites, and communications activities including radio broadcasts.

4. Organize joint community and local authority patrols to enforce fishery regulations in LMMAs, and rollout use of the law enforcement monitoring software SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool - <http://www.smartconservationsoftware.org>), which is being adopted nationally, to support collection and analysis of threat data in real-time and optimize planning of enforcement patrols.

5. Further expand Madagascar's largest LMMA network through the creation of the new LMMAs in Antongil Bay in partnership with local communities who wish to implement fisheries management mechanisms.

6. Conduct fish catch and ecological monitoring to assess impacts of LMMAs on fisheries and biodiversity, and to continue to build long-term datasets of catch/landings statistics to measure effects of improved resource management on fish catch.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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OUR PARTNERS:

Ministry of Environment, Ecology, and Forests (MEEF)—Ministry of Marine Resources and Fisheries (MRHP)—The Territorial Decentralized Communities with the three districts of Maroantsetra, Mananara, Antalaha—The Collaborative Platform for Sustainable Development of the Antongil Bay (PCDDBA) – The Federation of fishermen in Antongil Bay (FPBA) – 27 community managers of LMMAs – Madagascar National Parks (MNP)— The Darwin Initiative— Madagascar Biodiversity Fund (FAPBM)—GRET—The John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation—The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust—The Waterloo Foundation – U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)—WWF/USAID – Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) – Agence Française de Développement (AFD) - Private donors