Andavadoaka, SW Madagascar; Community Run Marine Reserve

Madagascar's southwest coastal areas are among the most biologically diverse yet least studied ecosystems in the Indian Ocean. The village of Andavadoaka is a remote coastal fishing village in the south west of Madagascar. With a population of 1,200 people the community has survived on artisanal fishing methods for generations, and they rely upon healthy oceans and coral reef systems to provide them food and income. But these critical marine habitats are facing severe threats from climate change, sedimentation, deforestation, rapidly growing coastal populations and poorly managed tourism activities. These factors have coincided with a recent dramatic increase in fisheries exports from international seafood collection companies which have developed a lucrative fisheries market throughout the region, raising concerns of overexploitation of the region's waters to supply global markets

Three years ago, the fishermen of Andavadoaka noticed that these changes were occurring and in partnership with local NGO scientists, decided to take matters into their own hands, using pioneering scientific techniques and traditional ecological knowledge to set up the first community-run marine protected area for Octopus, one of the most vital of marine resources for the village. On the success of this seasonal ban Andavadoaka's village elders are now working with conservation organisations and neighbouring communities to expand conservation projects to ensure the long-term sustainability of a variety marine species and habitats, ensuring their survival for future generations

"The Andavadoaka project shows MPAs (marine protected areas) not only serve as a powerful conservation tool helping species thrive, but can also be a powerful economic tool helping fisheries remain productive and profitable"
Alasdair Harris, Blue Ventures

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What did we achieve?

The world's first community-run MPA for octopus has led to a significant increase in the size and populations of the species in the region. Surveys show that the number of octopus caught in some areas increased 13 times, while the sum mean weight of octopus increased 25 times.

1 7 G

Madagascar government has used Andavadoaka as a model for implementing a national seasonal closure, and a minimum catch size for octopus.

7 8 G

Women are trained to conduct fortnightly surveys of all fish being brought into the village. The project, provides women with economic opportunities they otherwise would not have during the deep sea fishing season. They are now planning to train women in other villages to do the same.

3 7 8

Andavadoaka's work to build an eco-lodge will also provide community members with a sustainable alternative to destructive fishing practices, as well as an economic incentive for villagers to protect the beauty and health of coastal habitats in order to draw visitors to the area.

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Strong partnerships with regional, national and international conservation science groups as well as government agencies and commercial businesses in order to achieve their conservation goals.

7 8 G

Twenty ecotourism guides have been trained in Andavadoaka, learning issues such as conservation, local history and safety, allowing them to lead groups of tourists.

1 3 7 8 G

Creation of Andavadoaka's first children's environmental club, "Club Alo Alo" Through the environmental club, Andavadoaka hopes to create an ongoing legacy of conservation awareness.

2 7

Plans to create experimental aquaculture enterprises, including the production of sea cucumbers and algae. Such businesses would provide additional economic opportunities for the community while discouraging destructive fishing activities.

1 3 7

The women of Andavadoaka also are about to register an official Women's Association with local authorities. By registering, the group will be eligible to participate in and benefit from a variety of women's projects across the country

1 3 G

The Millennium Development Goals

1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

2 Achieve universal primary education

3 Promote gender equality and empower women

4 Reduce child mortality

5 Improve maternal health

6 Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

7 Ensure environmental sustainability

8 Develop a global partnership for development

G Good Governance

Good governance is about how decisions are taken and implemented in a state. Originally, the connotations of this notion included an efficient public sector, accountability and controls, but also decentralization and transparency. Today, good governance means more: It is not just confined to government action alone but also encompasses the interaction between government and civil society.