

Improving Information and Communication for Coastal Resource Management in a Post Tsunami Context

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Abstract

Insufficient information, poor access to data and a lack of coordination amongst stakeholders have been major impediments to successful coastal resource management in most countries. Management is often further complicated by numerous agencies with overlapping responsibilities and jurisdiction over the coastal zone. The need for sharing information and better coordination became increasingly important after the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami which resulted in large-scale reconstruction and ecosystem management initiatives being undertaken by a plethora of agencies and organizations. It also became increasingly clear that coordination was necessary not only at a national level but on a regional scale across South and Southeast Asia. Despite the acceptance that sustainable management of coastal resources and integration of ecosystem concerns is essential to long term livelihood security and economic growth in the region, the ability of most stakeholders to factor environment and sustainable livelihood concerns is constrained by information, capacity and coordination issues. In this context, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) has undertaken the task of establishing a regional information hub to facilitate effective and efficient post tsunami reconstruction and sustainable coastal ecosystem management across the South and Southeast Asian region. The information hub works with IUCN's two tsunami coordinating centers in Thailand and Sri Lanka, which are undertaking work to mainstream ecosystem concerns into post tsunami reconstruction through coastal development policy and practice, dialogue, coordination, and capacity building in environmental issues among the many agencies and organizations working in coastal areas. Major outputs of the information hub include an electronic database of technical experts on environmental conservation and post disaster ecosystem rehabilitation, an electronic documentation centre of key technical references, an electronic database of interventions and lessons learned from environmental components of post tsunami reconstruction projects, and an electronic newsletter on coastal ecosystem. The presentation will discuss IUCN efforts in database management and information sharing, the use of electronic tools for such purposes and ground level activities that support information management.