

PILOT PROJECTS IN SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

Integration of Tourism Into National Adaptation Strategies

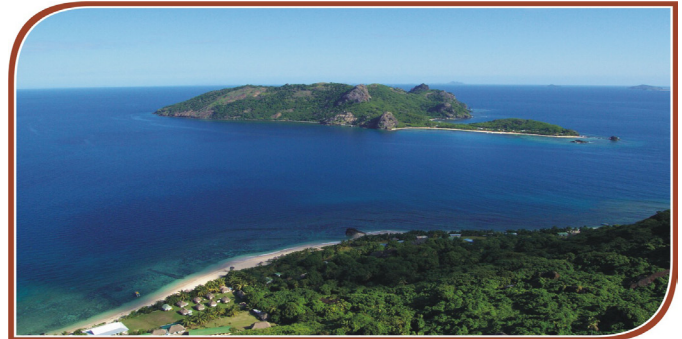
BACKGROUND

Considering the high dependency of many Small Island Developing States (SIDS) on tourism, and their high vulnerability to climate change and low adaptation capacity, UNWTO initiated a series of pilot adaptation projects at some of these island destinations. Funded by the Global Environmental Facility, activities have been undertaken in Fiji and the Maldives, in collaboration with UNDP and UNEP. The pilot projects are expected to deliver replicable outputs, considering that SIDS and other coastal destinations have similar challenges regarding climate change, such as shoreline and beach erosion, extreme climatic events (cyclones, storm surges, droughts, etc.), reduced water availability, degradation of coastal and marine ecosystems, among others.

The projects address policy issues, such as improved inter-ministerial coordination, streamlined regulations and environmental impact assessment processes, improvement of climate information for long term strategic tourism planning, as well as seasonal and short term operations and activities. They intend to implement on-the-ground measures at selected demonstration areas, addressing erosion control, water conservation and waste management, preservation of reef areas and coastal ecosystems, health issues, product diversification, etc. The projects have important capacity building components, targeting tourism operations and environmental managers, local communities, as well as building curricula in educational institutions.

INTEGRATED APPROACHES

The projects deal with tourism facilities, operations and neighbouring local communities, as well as community-based tourism activities in an integrated way, recognizing their strong interconnections, where they share the same fragile environmental resource base. The projects are developed where tourism can generate mutual interests and benefits through sourcing labour, supply of products and services locally.



Small island chains of Yasawa and Mamanuca in Fiji with small-scale tourism facilities are particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts and extreme events

The projects are part of national strategies for both climate change adaptation and sustainable tourism development, supporting a number of related sectors and policy areas, such as agriculture, disaster risk management, health, water, education, among others.

The projects successfully brought together key ministries (such as tourism, environment, urban planning and infrastructure, fisheries, economy), tourism private sector associations (tour operators, hotels, tourism board, etc.), as well as NGOs and academic institutions in both countries.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- UNWTO – Department of Sustainable Development of Tourism
www.unwto.org/sdt
- Maldives project:
www.unwto.org/maldives-climate
- Fiji project:
www.unwto.org/sdt/project/en/projects.php?op=11#

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