

From Coast to Coast

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF TRANSBOUNDARY MANAGEMENT OF OUR SHARED OCEANS



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET



UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY
UNU-INWEH
Institute for Water,
Environment and Health



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Local fish catch, Sierra Leone
(Sub Regional Fisheries Commission)

Foreword

Covering over 70% of the planet, our oceans have tremendous economic, social and ecological value. They provide over US\$1 trillion annually to the world economy in market goods and services and many times that in non-market amenities. Services provided by marine ecosystems include food security, tourism opportunities, carbon sequestration and coastal protection. Yet, our oceans are under threat from unsustainable practices, including over-fishing, land-based sources of pollution, habitat destruction and climate change.

Recognizing the critical need for global action to ensure the sustainability of our oceans, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) has provided tremendous support to ocean governance. Since its establishment over 24 years ago, the GEF, the largest investor in transboundary water cooperation, has financed over US\$1.5B in grants to over 170 states.

This publication highlights how the GEF has worked with partners to improve ocean governance by working across nations to promote ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries and other marine and coastal resources, protect coastal habitats from land based sources of pollution, and catalyze the formation of country driven, country owned and — ultimately — country financed regional institutional frameworks. As discussed in the case studies, GEF support has helped:

- Establish the Benguela Current Commission in Southern Africa, which brought together the nations of Angola, Namibia and South Africa, to work towards sustainable ocean governance;
- Create the Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia, which pioneered best practices in integrated coastal management across 12 East Asian countries; and,
- Ensure the sustainable management of shared marine resources of the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem, bringing together over 25 small island states to build an integrated management approach for the Large Marine Ecosystem.

GEF initiatives have enhanced global and regional cooperation and led to improved ecosystem health, services and human wellbeing through stronger governance at regional, national and local levels. These projects apply an integrated cross sectorial approach while engaging the private sector, non-governmental organizations and multilateral institutions. GEF ocean projects have helped solidify powerful approaches of working from ridge to reef and from village chiefs to cabinet ministers. In doing so, these projects are taking innovative approaches showing how regional agreed frameworks may

produce global environment benefits, while incorporating the market value of marine resources into national economies resulting in sustainable economic benefits, such as increased small and large-scale fishing revenues, the creation of new industries and improved sustainable land production and incomes. These GEF integrated projects demonstrate the positive social and economic contribution ocean management can have on national economies.

The manner in which we treat the oceans over the next few decades will determine whether economies will be able to thrive well into the future. The success we have realized to date demonstrates the way to a new paradigm based on partnerships at local to global scales that leads to both transboundary regional cooperation and ecosystem and human wellbeing benefits on the ground. Working in partnership with many countries and institutions, the GEF looks forward to building on successes to date to ensure the sustainability of our oceans for the benefit of present and future generations.



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