

Western Indian Ocean Challenge Concept Presentation

Adapting to climate change and promoting resilient ecosystems, sustainable livelihoods, and human security

Summary of Event

June 8th, 2009
Bonn, Germany



From left to right: Mr. Aboulhouda Youssouf (Comoros), Mr. Waduawatte Lekamge Sumathipala (Sri Lanka), Mr. Yabanex Batista (TNC), Mr. Hachime Abdérémane (Comoros), Mr. Wills Agricole (Seychelles), Mr. Gregory Muia Munyao (Kenya), Ms. Deborah Barker-Manase (Marshall Islands), Mr. Neville Ash (IUCN), Mr. Richard J. Mwendandu (Kenya), Ms. Kate Brown (GLISPA), Mr. Germain Randriasandratana (Madagascar). Not in photo: Mr. Ali Lishan (Maldives), Mr. Santaram Mooloo (Mauritius), Ms. Marília Telma António Manjate (Mozambique).
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I. Introduction

In the occasion of the UNFCCC Bonn Climate Change Talks in June 2009 the Government of the Republic of the Seychelles invited countries and institutions with interest in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) to a presentation on a proposal for a Western Indian Ocean Challenge around adaptation to climate change and the promotion of resilient ecosystems, sustainable livelihoods, and human security. The meeting was hosted by Mr. Wills Agricole (Director General for Policy Planning and Services Division, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources and Transport - MENRT). Countries that attended the event included: Seychelles (host), Comoros, Kenya, Maldives, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, and Sri Lanka. Organizations and institutions that also joined the event were the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA), The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). A full list of participants is provided in Annex I.

Event's Objectives

The objectives of the event were to:

- Present and discuss the proposal for a Western Indian Ocean Challenge on adaptation, promoting resilient ecosystems, sustainable livelihoods, and human security.
- Get reactions from countries and institutions on the proposal.
- Identify immediate next steps.

II. Western Indian Ocean Challenge Concept Presentation

In his remarks Mr. Agricole emphasized the imminent threat that climate change presents to the WIO region, its effects on its people, environment and economies. Highlighting that decisions at the international level around climate change also need to be accompanied by concrete action at the national and regional levels, Mr. Agricole presented the proposed concept of the Western Indian Ocean Challenge (WIO Challenge), its proposed general goals, and engagement principles (for more details see WIO Challenge Fact Sheet in Annex II).

WIO Challenge Concept

The Western Indian Ocean Challenge is proposed as an initiative that will seek to secure national and regional commitments and action to advance climate change adaptation strategies.

... never before has humanity been so profoundly aware of climate change. The world is very aware of the "what" and the "why". What is needed now is a concerted focus on the "how". Therefore this initiative, the WIO Challenge, will contribute on the "how".
(Mr. Wills Agricole, Republic of the Seychelles)

Proposed General Goals

- Raise the region's institutional preparedness and capacity to address climate change and promote the incorporation of adaptation strategies within development strategies in various sectors, including fisheries management, energy, food security, environment and others.
- Encourage adequate and sustainable financing to implement adaptation strategies
- Create a network of pilot sites to demonstrate effective community & ecosystem-based adaptation strategies and best practices that can be replicated throughout the WIO
- Identify and encourage focused actions on issues requiring collective approaches from countries and partners
- Increase awareness of and attention to climate change impacts and adaptation needs in the Western Indian Ocean by local, national and the international communities.

During the event Mr. Agricole also highlighted some of the benefits the WIO Challenge could provide to the region.

- Can serve as a leadership platform that can allow mutual support among participating countries in achieving long term goals.
- Support the region to take action to adapt to climate change, to implement commitments around the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the Convention of Biodiversity (CBD), and promote synergies around these two and other international and regional agreements.
- Help the region better align individual projects at the regional and national level.

Mr. Agricole also pointed out that the region can use existing processes and frameworks to advance this initiative. Some of the examples highlighted were:

- **GLISPA (Global Island Partnership) (www.cbd.int/island/glispa.shtml)**
In Mauritius in January 2005, following the deadly tsunami that hit the Indian Ocean the month before, President Michel and his Palau homologue launched GLISPA as a means of seeking mutual assistance and support for island states coping with climate change. Leaders are

now promoting the development of the partnership into a bigger international island movement for actions.

- **UNEP Nairobi Convention (<http://www.unep.org/NairobiConvention/>)**
The Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region was signed in 1985 and came into force in 1996. It provides a mechanism for regional cooperation, coordination and collaborative actions, and enables the Contracting Parties to harness resources and expertise from a wide range of stakeholders and interest groups towards solving interlinked problems of the coastal and marine environment.
- **Sea Level Rise foundation (<http://sealevelrise.blogspot.com>)**
President James A Michel introduced the Sea-Level Rise Foundation to the First Global Island Partnership Meeting in the Italian capital of Rome on 25th September 2007. Seychelles, through the Sea-Level Rise Foundation, wants to evoke the attention of the world to the climate-change dangers faced by whole nations and their cultures, particularly the coastal communities.

III. Micronesia Challenge Presentation

Following the presentation of the WIO Challenge, Mr. Agricole invited Ms. Deborah Barker-Manase, Deputy Director, Office of Environmental Planning and Policy Coordination, from the Republic of the Marshall Islands to present the experience of the Micronesia Challenge. The Micronesia Challenge was launched in October 2006 during the Convention on Biodiversity COP-6 in Curitiba, Brazil and aims to effectively conserve at least 30% of the nearshore marine resources and 20% of the terrestrial resources across Micronesia by 2020.

The participation of the Republic of Marshall Islands also continued to strengthen the ties between the Micronesia Challenge and the emerging WIO Challenge. In March 2009 a Micronesian Challenge delegation visited Seychelles to exchange experiences. More information about the Micronesia Challenge is available in Annex III or visit <http://www.micronesiachallenge.org>



Ms. Deborah Barker-Manase (Marshall Islands) and Mr. Wills Agricole (Seychelles).
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IV. Discussion

All country participants thanked the Seychelles for bringing them together and supported Seychelles' proposal on the WIO Challenge. All pointed out, through examples, the impacts of climate change in their own countries, and that action on addressing climate change was urgent. As there are many ties as well as diversity among the countries, all supported the idea of having a regional approach to address climate change impacts in the WIO.

Country representatives asked Seychelles to guide them on moving forward towards the UNFCCC COP-15 in Copenhagen and beyond, and asked if a more "formal" meeting could be arranged before Copenhagen. All indicated their interest in bringing back to their capitals the results of this event and stressed the importance of getting high level support in their countries for this initiative and linking it to the UNFCCC COP-15. Participants also highlighted that a proposal for an initiative like this one in the Western Indian Ocean had been long-time needed.

The three organizations present at the event also expressed their support to the proposed initiative and their availability to work with Seychelles and others in moving forward.

V. Closing and Next Steps

Mr. Agricole, closed the evening pointing out that the event had been of good significance as the country representatives agreed in principle to move the process forward. In responding to the question on a follow-up meeting to further discuss the WIO Challenge and way forward to the UNFCCC COP-15, Mr. Agricole indicated his intent of raising this within the Government of the Seychelles and respond back to all participants. Specific next steps are detailed below.

Next Steps:

- Participants debrief their governments on the WIO Challenge.
- Follow-up meeting
 - Potential dates and venues may include:
 - Options will be sought and analyzed
 - Proposed Meeting objective:
 - How to move forward the WIO Challenge, including plans for the UNFCCC COP-15
 - Seychelles Government to follow-up with countries and others on arrangements for the meeting.
- UNFCCC COP-15

VI. Annexes List

A. List of Participants

B. Western Indian Ocean Challenge Concept Proposal Fact Sheet

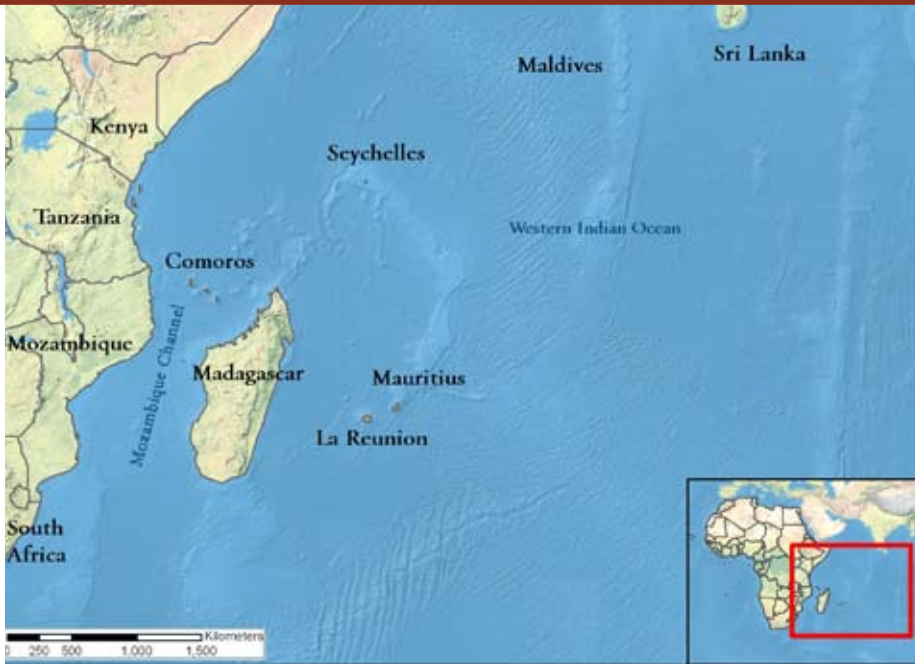
C. Micronesia Challenge Fact Sheet

Annex A: List of Participants

Country	Name	Title / Institution	Contact Information
Seychelles (Host)	Mr. Wills Agricole	Director General Policy Planning and Services Division Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources and Transport - (MENRT)	English River P.O. Box 1145 Victoria t: (248) 67-0400 f: (248) 61-0647 e: w.agricole@pps.gov.sc wagricole@yahoo.com
Comoros	Mr. Hachime Abdérémane	Director of Energy and Industry, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Environment	B.P. 41 Moroni t: +269 76-2684 / +269 773-9343 f: +269 75-0003 e: hachimea@yahoo.fr hachimeabder@gmail.com
	Mr. Aboulhouda Youssouf	Project Coordinator, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Environment	e: aboulhouday@gmail.com
Kenya	Mr. Richard J. Mwendandu	Director, Multilateral Environmental Agreements Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources	N.H.I.F. Building Ragati Road P.O. Box 30126-00100 Nairobi, Kenya t: +254-20-273-0808/9 t :+254-20-2429484 e : directormeas@environment.go.ke rj_mwendandu@yahoo.com
	Mr. Gregory Muia Munyao		e : gmunyao2000@yahoo.com gmunyao@industrialization.go.ke
Madagascar	Mr. Germain Randriasandratana	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Tourism	BP 571 Ampandrianomby Antananarivo 101, Madagascar t: +261 3207 544 90 e: pf.cc@moov.mg randriasandratana@yahoo.fr
Maldives	Mr. Ali Lishan	Environment Analyst Ministry of Housing, Transport and Environment	Ministry of Housing, Transport and Environment 3rd Floor, Fen Building, Ameenee Magu Male, 20156 t: +960 332 4861 f :+960 332-2286 e: ali.lishan@environment.gov.mv alilishan@gmail.com
Mauritius	Mr. Santaram Mooloo	Ag. Deputy Director, Department of Environment, Ministry of Environment and NDU	Ken Lee Tower, Barracks St., Port Louis, Mauritius t: +230 213-4385 e: smooloo@mail.gov.mu
Mozambique	Ms. Marília Telma António Manjate	Director of International Cooperation, Ministry for Coordination of Environmental Affairs (MICOA)	Ministry for Coordination of Environmental Affairs (MICOA) Av. Acordos de Lusaka, 2115, P.Box 2020 Maputo t: +258-21 46-6495 / +258-21 46-5849 e: telmanjate@yahoo.com.br
Sri Lanka	Mr. Waduawatte Lekamge Sumathipala	Director, Climate Change Division Ministry of Environment and Natural	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources 82 Rajamalwatte Rd., Sampathpaya

		Resources	Battaramulla e: wsumathipala@hotmail.com
Republic of Marshall Islands	Ms. Deborah Barker-Manase	Deputy Director, Office of Environmental Planning and Policy Coordination, Office of the President	OEPPC P.O. Box 975 Email Majuro, Marshall Islands 96960 fax: (692)625-7918 e: deb.manase@gmail.com oeppcrmi@gmail.com ,
IUCN	Mr. Neville Ash	Head, Ecosystem Management Programme	28 rue Mauverney, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland tel: +41 22 999 0273 e: neville.ash@iucn.org
GLISPA	Ms. Kate Brown	GLISPA Coordinator	1630 Connecticut Avenue, NW 3 rd Floor Washington D.C. 20009 t: +1-202-387-4823 e: katebrownvitolio@gmail.com / kbrown@iucnus.org
TNC	Mr. Yabanex Batista	Senior Policy Advisor, TNC Europe & Africa	Jan van Nassautraat 34 2596BT The Hague, Netherlands tel: +31 6 2144 9592 e: ybatista@tnc.org

Western Indian Ocean Challenge



Current and Future Climate Change Impacts on Islands and Coastal Areas

- Sea-level rise threatens the very existence of low-lying islands and coastal zones and their inhabitants.
- Sea-temperature increases and resulting coral bleaching are affecting reef systems and the livelihoods of coastal communities that depend on local fisheries for food security, and the tourism and fisheries industries.
- Reduced predictability of weather events and increased severity of storms.
- Seawater intrusion into freshwater sources will present increasing challenges.
- Changes in precipitation patterns.

Adapting to climate change and promoting resilient ecosystems, sustainable livelihoods, and human security

Climate Change and the Western Indian Ocean

Climate change is already affecting the resources upon which people rely and all countries will be forced to adapt to the changing climate. Like all vulnerable regions, Western Indian Ocean (WIO) countries and territories face pivotal choices in response to climate change. Will the region simply be swept along in the wake of inevitable transformations? Or will governments and civil society work together to develop and implement an action plan? To truly adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and thus improve the prospects of the WIO's people and its environment, the region must take the latter course.

Approximately 30 million people in the WIO islands and East African coastal communities rely on the coastal environment for goods and services. Coastal and island communities are largely dependent on fishing, shipping and tourism for their livelihoods. UNEP's Africa Environment Outlook

indicates that in the WIO islands fisheries contribute significantly to national economies, with fish processing and transshipment providing additional employment and revenue. In Mozambique and Tanzania, estuarine prawn fisheries make an important economic contribution as well. Similarly, the region is highly dependent on its natural

“ When you live on an island, climate change is a reality that you wake to face every day. ”
— H.E. James A. Michel,
President of the Republic of the Seychelles
and GLISPA Co-Chair

resources base for its thriving tourism sector. For example, the World Tourism and Travel Council points out that in 2008 travel and tourism contributed 56.3%, and 30.2% of GDP in Seychelles and Mauritius, respectively.

The natural resources that fuel this economic activity are already under pressure from issues such as poverty,

overfishing, overdevelopment, pollution, food security, and environmental degradation. The unavoidable impacts of climate change will only exacerbate these problems and present mounting challenges to the sustainable development of the region.

Adapting to climate change goes beyond investing in infrastructure in an attempt to hold nature at bay. A sound response will require nations to integrate adaptation strategies, including those based on the key role of natural ecosystems, into all aspects of policy development and capacity building in order to enable institutions and people to manage climate-related risks and avoid reversals in human development. Given the threat that climate change poses to the WIO region, there is an opportunity now for governments and other stakeholders to come together and work on the common challenges around climate change.

A Proposal for a Western Indian Ocean Challenge

The Western Indian Ocean Challenge is proposed as an initiative that will seek to secure national and regional



commitments and action to advance climate change adaptation strategies. Led by the region's Governments and supported by local, regional and international organizations, multilateral agencies and the private sector, future partners of this initiative can work together to reduce the adverse impacts of climate change, thereby helping communities throughout the region to foster sustainable livelihoods and resilient ecosystems, which are the foundation of food, energy and human security.

Proposed Goals

- Raise the region's institutional preparedness and capacity to address climate change and promote the incorporation of adaptation strategies within development strategies in various sectors, including fisheries management, energy, food security, environment and others.
- Encourage adequate and sustainable financing to implement adaptation strategies
- Create a network of pilot sites to demonstrate effective ecosystem-based adaptation strategies and best practices

that can be replicated throughout the WIO

- Identify and encourage actions on issues requiring collective approaches from countries and partners
- Increase awareness of and attention to climate change impacts and adaptation needs in the Western Indian Ocean by local, national and the international communities.

Engagement Principles

This Challenge is proposed as an initiative that:

- Is open to national or local governments in the Western Indian Ocean and to local, national and international agencies and organizations who share its goals and objectives.
- Supports commitments based on national, regional, global and/or organizational priorities.
- Encourages collaboration among governments and partners.
- Complements and supports, without duplicating, existing commitments that create synergies to ensure the effective use of limited human and financial resources.

Global Island Partnership and Island Challenges

Since its inception in 2005, the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA) has engaged more than 60 governments and their partners all over the world to advance high-level commitments and on-the-ground action for island conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. GLISPA has assisted participant countries and organizations in conceiving, launching or strengthening more than 12 major commitments, including the following:

Micronesia Challenge

In 2006, five Micronesian governments—the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the U.S. Territory of Guam, and the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands—joined together in committing to effectively conserve at least 30% of the nearshore marine resources and 20% of the terrestrial resources across Micronesia by 2020.

Caribbean Challenge

Launched at the 9th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2008, it is a commitment by eight Caribbean nations — Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines — to expand their marine near shore area under protection to 20% and develop conservation finance mechanisms to support national systems of protected areas by 2020.

Sea Level Rise Foundation

President Michel of the Seychelles has established a global foundation to bring resources and expertise together to support small island states, islands and other low-lying areas in adapting to the growing threat of sea level rise and avoiding the first climate refugees.

Learn more about GLISPA 2010 at www.cbd.int/island/glispa.shtml.

For more information, contact Dr. Rolph A. Payet, Special Advisor to the President, Republic of the Seychelles: rolph@statehouse.gov.sc; t: +248 224 391; f: +248 225137.



During the 1997/98 El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) warming event, WIO reefs suffered severe bleaching and, depending on location, up to 95% coral mortality. In Mombasa and Zanzibar, a 30% loss of corals resulted in tourism industry losses of about US \$12-18 million.



Micronesia Challenge

MICRONESIA

Micronesia is home to some of the most vibrant cultures and diverse variety of plant and animal life on Earth. The unique heritage and traditions, still strongly held by the people of Micronesia, have been shaped by their geographic remoteness and the rich resources of their lands and seas which contain habitats and species found nowhere else on earth. Yet the features that make these islands unique also make them especially vulnerable to environmental threats such as deforestation, overharvesting, climate change and invasive species.

Without immediate action, the people of Micronesia face continued degradation of the natural resources on which their culture and livelihoods depend. The Micronesia Challenge now provides a framework for action on an unprecedented scale.

Micronesia Challenge: effectively conserve at least 30% of the near-shore marine resources and 20% of the terrestrial resources across Micronesia by 2020.

Covering 6.7 million square kilometers of ocean, the Micronesia Challenge represents more than 20% of the Pacific Island region - and 5% of the largest ocean in the world.

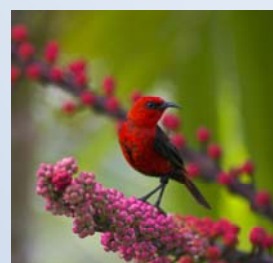
The Micronesia Challenge is a commitment by the Chief Executives of the **Federated States of Micronesia**, the **Republic of the Marshall Islands**, the **Republic of Palau**, the **U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands** and the **U.S. Territory of Guam** to effectively conserve at least 30% of the near-shore marine resources and 20% of the terrestrial resources across Micronesia by 2020.

This ambitious challenge far exceeds current goals set by international conventions and treaties, which call for countries to conserve 10% of terrestrial and marine resources by 2010 and 2012 respectively. The challenge also emphasizes the need for Micronesian leaders to work together at the regional level to confront environmental and sustainable development issues.

“ While resource conservation has always been a core element and practice of the Micronesian culture, we have come to the realization that the degradation of biodiversity is a global phenomenon that calls for a concerted response by the international community as a whole. ”

The Honorable Emanuel Mori, *President of the Federated States of Micronesia (2008)*

Photo Credits: (from left to right) Katrina Adams, Amy Vitale, Susi Menazza Olmsted, Leslie Ware, Bryan Jones



maintaining the micronesian way of life

Throughout Micronesia, the majority of people living on these small islands depend on natural resources for their food, livelihood, traditional cultures and hopes for future long-term economic prosperity.

- * The annual net benefits to the Pacific from coral reefs have been estimated at \$2 billion, and approximately \$800 million worth of benefits annually may be distributed across Micronesia.
- * Healthy ecosystems provide important services, such as food, clean drinking water, income from tourism, fishing and diving, and protection from storms.

The Micronesia Challenge will help maintain these ecosystem services and protect:

- * at least 66 threatened species recorded on the IUCN Red List;
- * More than 480 coral species – 60% of all known corals, and
- * more than 1,300 species of reef fish, 85 species of birds and 1,400 species of plants (200 of which are endemic).



cornerstone
of a
global
island partnership

Implementation and Sustainability

Each jurisdiction is developing their own strategies for implementation including identifying the most biologically important areas, establishing or strengthening protected areas and ensuring continued effective management and oversight. The other key goal in the Micronesia Challenge is to create sustainable and continuous sources of funding to assure that the precious natural resources of Micronesia are maintained in perpetuity. All five governments have already made initial impressive strides. For example, the Republic of Palau has developed and started to implement a nationwide comprehensive set of regulations for identifying protected areas sites, and is now developing management and enforcement regimes.

Vital Funding: A Commitment From Concerned Donors

It is currently estimated that an endowment of approximately \$75 million will need to be raised to support the long-term sustainability of the Challenge in all five jurisdictions.

To assist in this effort, The Nature Conservancy and Conservation International have together pledged \$6 million to leverage an additional \$12 million for the first phase of the Challenge. The leaders and their partners are working to secure matching funds for this pledge and the additional funding to support the long-term expansion and effective management of protected area networks for each of the Micronesia Challenge jurisdictions. The Global Environment Facility has pledged a \$6 million match as part of a new Pacific Alliance for Sustainability initiative.

The Micronesia Challenge serves as a model for island conservation, initiated by a coalition of regional governments, endorsed at an international level, and implemented on the ground with local communities. With funding in place, accompanied by technical support for the implementation, the natural resources essential to the livelihoods of the Micronesian peoples will be preserved and unique ecosystems saved.

Supporters of the Micronesia Challenge

German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety; the Government of Turkey; the Global Environment Facility; the David and Lucile Packard Foundation; the Micronesia Conservation Trust; U.S. Department of the Interior; U.S. Department of Commerce—National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; United Nations Environment Programme; United Nations Development Programme; The Nature Conservancy; Conservation International; RARE; and Anonymous Private Donors.

The Micronesia Challenge is not a standalone initiative. Rather, it is part of a much larger and growing commitment by island nations throughout the world to take action in protecting nature and preserving livelihoods. This commitment has been supported through the Global Island Partnership, a partnership that assists islands in addressing one of the world's greatest challenges—to protect and sustainably manage the invaluable natural resources that support people, cultures, and livelihoods in their island homes around the world. The Global Island Partnership is a platform to champion the interests of 500 million people on 130,000 islands worldwide.

Inspiring Others to Action

- * In May 2008, the governments of the Bahamas, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, St. Vincent and Grenadines committed to the Caribbean Challenge — to protect 20% of near-shore marine areas by 2020 and develop conservation finance mechanisms to support their national systems of Protected Areas.
- * In May 2009, leaders of the six Coral Triangle countries — Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Timor Leste, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands — officially launched the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security, a broad-based initiative to ensure the sustainability of marine and coastal resources that provide livelihoods to over 120 million people in the region.

Photo Credits: Island Aerial ©Jez O'Hare, Diver ©Eugene Joseph

For more information please contact: Ms. Charlene Mersai | Micronesia Challenge Coordinator | micronesiachallenge@gmail.com
Mr. Marion Henry | Chair, Micronesia Challenge Steering Committee | marionh@mail.fm
www.micronesiachallenge.org