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MINISTÈRE DE L'AGRICULTURE, DE LA PÊCHE, DE
L'INDUSTRIE, DE L'ARTISANAT ET DE
L'ENVIRONNEMENT- UNION DES COMORES

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Jan-Feb 2008

Community monitors seagrass beds

Seagrass is found throughout the Comoros and provides an important habitat for endangered species including turtles and dugongs. Seagrass beds also act as essential nursery grounds for commercially-significant fish stocks. During the third week of February, C3 conducted a seagrass training workshop with the Association Pour la Preservation de l'Environnement (APPE) at Planete Plage, Raheleo, Mitsamiouli. This was also coupled with hands-on fieldwork, looking at animal species living among the seagrass beds.

C3 and APPE have also set up a permanent monitoring transect at Planete Plage. APPE will periodically survey the transect, collecting data on seagrass species and coverage and will also promote awareness of the importance of seagrass to the local community. APPE hopes to become an active member of the international Seagrass Watch community monitoring programme (see www.seagrasswatch.org).



SocMon Workshop postponed

The SocMon workshop that was advertised in the last edition of the journal has been postponed until further notice due to the situation in Anjouan. It is hoped that this workshop (funded by NOAA and coordinated with CORDIO) will take place as soon as the situation has calmed. C3 will continue to accept applications to participate until the 14th of March whereafter interviews will be conducted and participants chosen. The participants will be trained in SocMon methods of socio-economic research in particular focusing on marine resource use and will contribute to the implementation of a network of SocMon sites throughout the Comoros.



Training in seagrass monitoring techniques at Mitsamiouli



Shark-fishing survey

C3 has recently started a self-funded project to assess shark fisheries in Comorian waters in collaboration with scientists on Mayotte. During the last two months C3 has carried out surveys amongst fishers in four different villages: Iconi, Moroni, Hantsambou and Itsandra.

Thanks to the cooperation of local communities, the project has proven to be a success. Fishers have shared their unique knowledge to allow a better understanding of the techniques and tools employed in catching sharks, the price of shark meat, consumer preferences, the shark's reputation amongst fishers and also interesting stories regarding local beliefs and traditional knowledge.

As an incentive to encourage participation in this work, C3 is running a prize lottery for all fishers involved in the survey. During the next months C3 will continue to carry out these surveys on the three islands of the Comoros.

Whales and Dolphins at the Ecole Française

C3's programme of environmental education in local schools continued in January with a visit to the Ecole Française in Moroni. A presentation describing the biology and life history of whales and dolphins was given to a class of students in CP2. The students were very enthusiastic about the presentation and asked many questions. C3 will continue with further presentations at the Ecole Française during March.



Shark fishermen



'...to develop conservation efforts worldwide by building the capacity of local individuals and institutions through grassroots research and training initiatives'

Tuna tagging awareness continues

C3 has continued its campaign to raise awareness about the Regional Tuna Tagging Project - a European Development Fund / Indian Ocean Commission project currently being implemented throughout the Western Indian Ocean. During the last two months C3 has visited villages on Grande Comore where we have talked to fishers, handed out flyers and put up posters. C3's radio and TV emissions will also serve as fora to spread the message throughout the Comoros.

UPS supports C3

C3 is grateful to UPS, and in particular, Patrice Maury, for providing us with free shipping between Mauritius and the Comoros. This sponsorship will enable us to produce high-quality awareness-raising and training materials in Mauritius for use on our Comoros projects.

We are also grateful to Rogers Aviation for providing us with free excess baggage allowances on flights between Mauritius and the Comoros.



Hotel Moroni supports International Year of the Reef

Hotel Moroni has generously funded the production of International Year of the Reef (IYOR) and other environmental education posters. C3 is a focal point organization for IYOR and we have also recently produced IYOR bumper stickers which are currently being distributed to the taxi drivers of Moroni. Hotel Moroni has further confirmed its support for environmental education in the Comoros by agreeing to fund a series of environmental education videos to be broadcast on national television.



Junior ecoguards

Young Environmental Leaders of the Comoros

C3's ongoing projects to train young Comorians to protect their natural resources have received a significant boost in the last couple of months. Firstly, the Captain Planet Foundation has funded a summer camp in Mitsamouli for a group of secondary school students. Summer camp participants will have a great time camping on Planete Plage, where they will experience the riches of the unique Comorian marine environment first-hand and learn about what they can do to protect it. Participants in the summer camp will be chosen through an essay competition which will be launched on Grande Comore in the next month. We have also recently received some exciting news from the UNEP-Volvo adventure awards: the Junior Ecoguards of Mohéli have been selected to participate alongside youth from 14 other countries in an international seminar in Sweden to present their efforts to protect sea turtles.



IYOR Poster



Djabal TV

C3 has now established a strong working relationship with the national TV station: Djabal TV, based in our own home town of Iconi. Djabal have been documenting our work and spreading awareness of natural resource management issues in the Comoros.

C3-Comores Publications

C3-Comores has now produced over 20 scientific papers, technical reports, conference posters and presentations documenting our work since 2005. We would like to remind Journal Ngouva readers that these are available to download from the 'reports' page of our website www.c-3.org.uk.

New interns

C3 welcomes two new interns, both from Italy: Enrico Andreini and Nada Correale. Enrico has a background in Marine Biology coupled with a Masters in Aquaculture. He has worked in aquaculture in Malaysia and India. Nada graduated from the University of Naples, Italy with a BSc in Environmental Science. She has worked in the Gaiola marine protected area of Naples.

The C3 Team

- Melissa Hauzer, Programme Coordinator
- Daniella Blake, Programme Officer
- Enrico Andreini, Intern
- Nada Correale, Intern
- Al'ya's'aa Ben Ahmed (Paradise), Student Trainee
- Maoulida Kamal (MC), Student Trainee
- Mouzidalifa Yssouf, Ecotourism Officer
- Emile Bouba, Translator

