



## 5-YEAR GLOBAL PROGRAMME

LEADING THE UN DECADE ON ECOSYSTEM  
RESTORATION

**Concept Note for Restoration Flagship**  
Small Island Developing States - SIDS

For Executive Board Approval at its 1st meeting

December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021

## 1. Project Factsheet

<i>Project title:</i>	SIDS Ecosystem Restoration Flagship		
<i>Countries:</i>	3 SIDS across the 3 SIDS regions as follows: <b>Saint Lucia</b> (Caribbean region); <b>Vanuatu</b> (Pacific region), <b>Comoros</b> (AIS <sup>1</sup> region). <i>N.B. Those SIDS countries have been tentatively selected based on their (i) level of political will and tangible commitments towards blue economy transition at national level, (ii) learning, replicability, and scalability potential, (iii) global and regional outreach potential.</i>		
<i>Implementing partners</i>	UNDESA, UNEP, FAO		
<i>National / regional partners</i>	<p><u>National level:</u> National Governments in the 3 SIDS, including: Ministry of Environment, National Agency for Protected Areas, and Forestry; Ministry of Agriculture, including fisheries department, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Planning, National Bureau of Statistics. Tourism and fisheries private sectors. Community-based organizations.</p> <p><u>Regional level:</u> Cartagena Convention (CEP), Nairobi Convention, Noumea Convention (SPREP), Regional institutions (e.g. SPC, CARICOM, COI), UN regional Economic Commissions (ESPAC, ECLAC, ECA). The Melanesian Spearhead Group.</p> <p><u>International level (indicative):</u> Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), Global Islands Partnerships (GLISPA), Duke University, TNC, CI.</p>		
<i>Duration: 3 to 4 years</i>	<i>Project Start</i>	March 2022	<i>Project End</i> December 2025
<i>Specific focus of the project</i>	The SIDS Flagship will promote the integration of marine and coastal ecosystem restoration/conservation and sustainable blue finance into COVID-19 economic recovery and growth in 3 SIDS through a connected 'ridge to reef' & seascape management approach in order to build back better and bluer. In a nutshell, this initiative will put marine and coastal ecosystems at the heart of economic policy and decision-making in the era of COVID 19. Under the UN Decade, this Flagship will also put a face to marine and coastal ecosystem restoration with SIDS leading by example and inspiring pride and support within countries and political support and investments from abroad.		
<i>Indicative budget</i>	USD 5,000,000 (7% of PSC included)		

## 2. SIDS Flagship Proposal Summary

Despite SIDS unique structural and endogenous development challenges, currently exacerbated by the pandemic, COVID-19 economic recovery represents a unique opportunity for SIDS to catalyze transformative change for people and their blue environment. Through this SIDS Flagship proposal, the UN Decade will contribute to unlock the blue economy potential and reduce nature-based economic and financial risks in 3 SIDS and associated sites. Well informed and coordinated ecosystem restoration and conservation, following the principles of both [Sustainable Blue Economy Finance](#) and of [Ecosystem Restoration](#), will transform SIDS' unique ocean-based challenges into opportunities in order to accelerate the implementation of SDG 14 and other ocean-related SDGs. A global and country-based accompanying

<sup>1</sup> AIS stands for Atlanctic, Indian Ocean and South China Sea. The AIS region represents 1 of the 3 formal SIDS grouping per region.

communication strategy will leverage the SIDS flagship as an inspiring example and elevate marine and coastal restoration/conservation as a theme within the global ecosystem restoration movement.

In that context, the overall objective of this SIDS Flagship proposal is to promote the integration of marine and coastal ecosystem restoration/conservation and sustainable blue finance into COVID-19 economic recovery and growth in 3 SIDS through a connected 'ridge to reef' & seascape management approach in order to build back better and bluer. In a nutshell, the SIDS Flagship will put marine and coastal ecosystems at the heart of economic policy and decision-making in the era of COVID 19. The initiative will also put a face to marine and coastal ecosystem restoration, inspiring pride and support within countries and political support and investments from abroad.

In practical terms, the SIDS Flagship is divided into 3 components. The first two components (from integrated planning to targeted action) support country-level restoration activities through innovative partnerships with Governments, private sector and local communities. Country-level interventions will bridge recurrent and ongoing marine restoration/conservation project gaps which are often undermining replication and proper upscaling of restoration/conservation efforts. The third component promotes policy dialogue, advocacy, sharing of inspiring success stories, peer learning, youth engagement as well as SIDS-SIDS cooperation within and between the 3 SIDS regions. This third component is built on SIDS's demonstrated global leadership and political will for a sustainable ocean and blue economy transition which will greatly contribute to the global movement the UN Decade is encouraging. See section 3 for further details on the intervention logic in line with MPTF outcome 2 (Flagship) and delivered in synergy with MPTF Outcome 1 (Advocacy and Communication) and MPTF Outcome 3 (Monitoring and Reporting).

### 3. SIDS Context & Problem Statement

#### 3.1. SIDS as a Special Case for Ecosystem Management, Blue economy & Blue Finance

**Special case for Sustainable Development.** Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) are a distinct group of 38 UN Member States<sup>2</sup> which faces unique social, economic, and environmental vulnerabilities<sup>3</sup>. SIDS are internationally recognized as "special case for sustainable development" due to those shared unique vulnerabilities ([S.A.M.O.A Pathway Declaration](#), Biodiversity Convention, etc). Although countries worldwide are faced with accelerating change and challenges, for the 38 SIDS it tends to be more intense and rapidly felt because of their small physical scale, geographic isolation, extreme vulnerability to climate change, remoteness from international markets, reliance on tourism, trade and remittances. Non LDCs SIDS (also targeted by this proposal) have also limited access to concessional financing. Those SIDS unique structural and endogenous development challenges are undermining SIDS' capacities to achieve the 2030 agenda and effectively implement the Rio Conventions.

**Special case for marine and ridge to reef ecosystem restoration and conservation, sustainable blue economy and blue finance.** SIDS are also considered as Big Ocean States (BOS) due to their large ocean areas and resources that lie within their jurisdiction and that principally underpin their national economies. In that context, SIDS are also a special case for marine ecosystem restoration, conservation, and by extension for sustainable blue economy and blue finance, with a special focus on productive shallow water coastal systems that are strongly impacted by weakness in terrestrial management. The blue environment is a topic still undervalued in the budding global restoration movement, with large-scale funds and political partnerships more focused on forest and landscape restoration. SIDS' Exclusive Economic Zone is on average 28 times the country's land mass. While 3.5% of SIDS is land, and 96.5% is ocean the health and productivity of coastal and shallow water marine systems cannot be achieved in isolation from land management. Saint Lucia's marine reserve is the size of Germany, while the combined EEZs of Mauritius and the Seychelles represent an area bigger than India. Management of these exclusive economic zones

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<sup>2</sup> In the Pacific region this includes: Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu. In the Caribbean region this includes: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. In the Atlantic, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region, this includes: Bahrain, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Maldives, Mauritius, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Singapore.

<sup>3</sup> AOSIS. About Small Island Developing States. Available online at: <https://www.un.org/ohrrls/content/about-small-island-developing-states>

(EEZs) for example involves about 30% of all oceans and seas ([Mead, 2021](#)). This requires the combined efforts of national, regional and international land and water managers.

**Significant untapped economic potential.** Following OECD figures, prominent ocean-based sectors in SIDS are typically coastal tourism and fisheries. According to a recent report ([Mead, 2021](#)), each dollar invested in the sustainable ocean economy is estimated to yield, on average, five dollars in return. Restoring and conserving island fragile marine and coastal ecosystems (nature-based assets) can heavily strengthen and diversify SIDS' economies, making them more resilient to future shocks. The present and future of the tourism sector in SIDS highly depend on ecosystem restoration and conservation that can substantially unlock their blue economy potential. In a study conducted by Teelucksingh and Watson (2013), it was demonstrated that a 1 percent reduction in marine protected areas, terrestrial protected areas and key biodiversity sites would result in a decline in tourist arrivals of 5.6 percent, 2.5 percent and 8.6 percent respectively. This interdependence is critical to consider in order to obtain not only the buy-in, but also the full participation of private actors and the financial sector in ecosystem restoration and conservation in SIDS. Documenting and widely publicizing such investments would in turn inspire other countries with significant coastlines to act.

**COVID-19 Impact on SIDS narrow-resource based economies.** Endemic SIDS vulnerabilities and development challenges have now been amplified by the current global COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic fallout. As a [2020 OECD](#) study demonstrates, SIDS with higher GNI per capita levels are not more resilient to confront the present crisis. The social and economic effects of shutdowns of the global economy, is hitting SIDS disproportionately. With (nature-based) tourism accounting for up to 80 per cent of total export revenues in SIDS, globally, the unprecedented fall in blue tourism drastically reduced external earnings of SIDS. According to the [2021 UN Secretary General's report](#), "while the GDP of developing countries decreased by 3.3 per cent in 2020, that of SIDS decreased by around 9 per cent.

**Island biodiversity under threats.** Islands have a high level of endemism. Island species tend to be small, localized, and specialized and therefore any change in their ecosystem can drive them to extinction. Despite the blue economy potential and the fragility of islands' natural environment, marine resources and ecosystems in SIDS such as coral reefs, seagrasses and mangroves are significantly impacted by failures of management in land-based sectors such as agriculture, resource extractions and urban and tourism development, pollution, as well by marine activities such as illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, shipping industry, mining, offshore infrastructure, and other maritime impacts.

### 3.2. Persistent Gaps (to be bridged by this Flagship) in Ecosystem Restoration Projects

Many ongoing ecosystem restoration and conservation initiatives in SIDS have been designed to address the above-mentioned threats. However, there are clear **recurrent common barriers and gaps experienced by existing ridge to reef, coastal and marine restoration/conservation projects**, which are undermining replication and proper upscaling of restoration/conservation efforts. Those recurring gaps are drastically exacerbated by SIDS unique structural and endogenous development challenges (outlined in section 2.1). Recurrent gaps that this SIDS Flagship will particularly bridge (through MPTF support) are e.g. **(i)** Difficulty to deliver joined up ridge to reef and seascape management solutions, as government and private sector focus is fragmented within either terrestrial or marine focused sectors; **(ii)** Lack of connection between marine restoration/conservation and economic recovery/development along the coast – silo'ed approach; **(iii)** Lack of demonstrated methods, models and technologies for deciding where and how to invest in restoration to deliver environmentally sound and sustainable blue economic opportunities; **(iv)** Lack of connection between local level efforts (pilot) to national level structural change – strategic policy reform measures; **(v)** Limited private sector engagement combined by lack of capacities and limited environmental awareness of the private sector and underrepresentation of marine and coastal restoration in the current discourse; **(vi)** Lack of effective means of monitoring of marine restoration activities and associated gaps in data and reporting transparency preventing effective financial flows; **(vii)** Lack of regional dialogue on marine and coastal ecosystem conservation/restoration limiting awareness raising, peer learning and joint advocacy efforts by SIDS.

### 3.3. Three Countries of implementation and Site Selection: Rationale & Criteria

The SIDS Flagship will target **3 SIDS across the 3 SIDS regions** as follows: **Saint Lucia** (Caribbean region): **Comoros** (AIS region), **Vanuatu** (Pacific region). At this stage this list of country is tentative. While the inception phase (see section 6) will further refine the selection, including in-country site selection, and partnership building, and in addition to the blue restoration potential of course, the rationale behind this selection is threefold:

**1/ Political will and tangible commitments/entry points towards a blue economy transition at national level:** The SIDS Flagship aims to anchor the main field interventions in countries that have shown (i) extraordinary global leadership in pioneering innovative nature-based solutions, (ii) ambition for sustainable oceans, and (iii) political will with proven commitments towards blue economy transition pathways. Building on such existing political will and tangible commitments will pave the way for scaling up (through SIDS leading by example across the 3 SIDS regions) and will greatly contribute to the global movement the UN Decade aims to promote (MPTF Outcome 1).

In that perspective, it is worth mentioning that **Saint Lucia** is currently building a Blue Recovery Hub with the OECD and the World Economic Forum to share lessons with other SIDS on leveraging innovative finance to support their blue economy transitions. While St Lucia is Upper Middle Income Country, Vanuatu just graduated from the least developed country (LDC) category in 2020, and Comoros, an LDC, just entered the graduation pipeline in 2021 by meeting the graduation criteria for the first time. The recent LDC graduation-related support officially requested by both **Vanuatu and Comoros** to the UN, includes the development/implementation of Smooth Transition Strategy and assistance in accessing financing for the Transition. This formal transition constitutes a unique enabling environment in a country lifetime to not only connect marine restoration/conservation and economic recovery/development and support access to climate and environment finance but also to strategically mainstream a Sustainable Blue Economy Transition, particularly in 'Big Ocean States'.

**2/ Regional and Global outreach potential.** The SIDS Flagship aims to ensure fair geographical representativeness by having at least each SIDS region represented. This will allow to strategically expand the SIDS Flagship outreach potential by triggering policy dialogue, joint advocacy and peer exchange between and within regions (component 3 of the proposal -see section 3), as well as elevating lessons learned to the global community, serving as prominent showcase for the potential of coastal and marine restoration.

**3/ Learning and replication potential.** This is explained in section 4 of this note which explicitly covers replicability, scalability, and knowledge. Success stories from e.g. Saint Lucia (blue economy transition) and Fiji (blue bonds) could be showcased and inspire blue economy transition processes in other SIDS such as Vanuatu and Comoros for example. Beyond SIDS, lessons from these "Big Ocean States" could be transferred to other countries with significant coastlines or dependence on tourism and fisheries.

In terms of specific site selection within each the 3 targeted SIDS in view to implement practical scalable pilot marine and coastal ecosystem restoration/conservation measures (components 1 and 2 of the proposal - see section 3), the SIDS Flagship proposal has identified 5 main site selection criteria. Those will be used during the inception phase.

- Sites where ecosystem restoration/conservation project(s) are under establishment or in place.
- Sites suitable for application of joined-up ridge to reef & seascape management approach at target sites allowing inter-sectoral policy coordination, collaboration and biodiversity mainstreaming across marine conservation and use sectors.
- Sites where private sector investment and returns can be improved (particularly blue tourism and/or marine fisheries)
- Sites where local communities live and depend on marine and coastal systems for their day-to-day livelihoods.
- Sites where spatial management of marine and coastal systems (as Marine protected Areas, or Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECM)) is under establishment or in practice.

While the **specific sites** will be finalized in agreement with national stakeholders during the proposed inception phase (Q1-Q2 2022), ongoing restoration/conservation projects with relevant sites that meet the above-mentioned criteria have already been preliminary identified. Those are:

- **Saint Lucia:** The South East Coast of Saint Lucia project (GEF) covers mangroves, wetlands and coral reefs systems. The project area goes from the shoreline to 2 km into marine space. It includes the Pointe Sable Environmental Protection Area (1038 ha) which contains several designated Ramsar sites.

- **Comoros:** The GEF Western Indian Ocean Strategy Action Plan Programme (WIOSAP) covers the Comoros archipelago which has embarked on a large-scale initiative to establish a national network of marine protected areas to be co-managed with local communities and protecting representative portions of different types of ecosystems. These include the Coelacanth National Park, Mitsamiouli Ndroudé National Park and Shisiwani National Park. Those MPAs constitute the possible entry points for intervention in Comoros.

- **Vanuatu:** The By-catch and Integrated Ecosystem Management (BIEM) initiative in the Maskelyne group covering the South West of Malekula island will be a major focus, also translating learnt benefits to a GEF 5 plus Adaptation Fund project in Aneityum island. Malekula island has up to 90% of all the mangrove in Vanuatu with tradition spatial controls of fishing over coastal reef and lagoon systems, while Aneityum island has a Marine Sanctuary.

## 4. Proposed Interventions & Approach

### 4.1. SIDS Flagship Objective

Despite all the SIDS specific challenges, COVID-19 recovery represents a unique opportunity to catalyze transformative change for people and the blue environment in SIDS. Through this SIDS Flagship, the UN Ecosystem Restoration Decade will contribute to unlock the blue economy potential and reduce nature-based economic and financial risks in 3 SIDS. Well informed and coordinated marine and coastal ecosystem restoration and conservation will transform SIDS' unique challenges into opportunities in order to accelerate the implementation of SDG 14 and a suite of other ocean-related SDGs.

In that context, the **overall objective** of this SIDS Flagship is to promote the integration of marine and coastal ecosystem restoration/conservation and sustainable blue finance into COVID-19 economic recovery and growth in SIDS through a connected 'ridge to reef' & seascape management approach in order to build back better and bluer.

### 4.2. SIDS Flagship Approach, Components and Description of Interventions

In view to achieve the above-mentioned overall objective and bridge the gaps identified in section 2.2, the SIDS Flagship is boiled down into **3 interconnected pathways or project components**.

While the specific interventions and focus will vary from one targeted SIDS to another, the SIDS Flagship's strategy and interlinkages between the various project components follows one coherent approach that is summarized below (the 'storyline' of the proposal). Of course, depending on the inception phase and associated country context/priorities, the level of connectiveness between interventions will also fluctuate from one country to another. The succinct description below is followed by a country-by-country *menu of outputs* (see sub-section section 3.3).

**Component 1 (Mainstreaming, Informed decision-making & integrated planning)** will put marine and coastal restoration/conservation at the heart of sustainable blue economy policy and decision-making. It aims to assist Governments, private sector and civil society to better reflect people, planet, and prosperity related benefits of marine and coastal ecosystem restoration/conservation for economic recovery and sustainable growth within planetary boundaries. At local level, this component will focus on specific sites, such as Marine Protected Areas (MPA) and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in broader seascape management in the 3 targeted SIDS in view to (i) support local institutions (**output 1.1<sup>4</sup>**) in return-on-investment analysis applied to coral, seagrass or mangrove restoration / conservation,

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<sup>4</sup> Supported by MPTF Outcome 2 - Output 2.5 on Cost Benefits Analysis

and to (ii) assist businesses, such as blue eco-tourism and fisheries, ([output 1.2<sup>5</sup>](#)) to better understand their impacts and dependency on ecosystem services in given sites following [Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Principles](#). The latter will motivate fisheries and tourism industries operating in project sites in the 3 targeted SIDS to integrate nature-related financial risks/opportunities into their business plans in view to facilitate their access to blue finance provided by banks, insurers and investors. Component 1 will also support Governments at national level with policy reform and measures enabling the upscaling of marine and coastal restoration/conservation for blue recovery and the transition to sustainable, climate resilient and equitable blue economies ([output 1.3<sup>6</sup>](#)). In practical terms and using existing data and analysis (including inter alia, from outputs 1.1 and 1.2), Component 1 will apply a new Sustainable Blue Economy Transition Framework to support the development of (i) Integrated Blue Economy Policy Frameworks in 1 targeted SIDS, and (ii) National plan for the mainstreaming of Natural Capital Accounting into ocean policy and statistical production process in one targeted SIDS. Also, the data generated by this component will contribute and be supported by the monitoring and reporting framework of the UN Decade through the FERM - Framework for Ecosystem Restoration Monitoring ([output 1.4<sup>7</sup>](#)). By building on the existing FERM geospatial architecture for example, biophysical and socio-economic outcomes from the SIDS Flagship will be directly captured and reported through the UN Decades' reporting functions.

**Component 2 (Marine Restoration Actions, integrated Governance & Resource Mobilization)** will be partly guided and facilitated by the return-on-investment analysis and ecosystem services valuation produced in component 1. On one hand, the data-driven approach will guide the decision on where and how to invest in coupled restoration and conservation to deliver environmentally sound blue economic opportunities. On the other hand, it will also facilitate the buy-in as well as the effective participation of private sector, civil society and local communities in coastal and marine ecosystem restoration and conservation efforts. This component 2 will therefore promote the implementation of targeted scalable pilot marine and coastal ecosystem restoration/conservation measures through public-private partnerships (with the tourism or fisheries sectors) in the targeted sites as part of blue economic recovery and growth ([output 2.1<sup>8</sup>](#)). Under this output a small grant program will be developed to incentivize implementation with scalability potential. This will be strategic and innovative to ensure that every sector and actor depending and/or impacting the restored ecosystems (upstream and downstream) are fully involved. Going hand in hand with implementation, Component 2 will also ensure proper monitoring based on the FERM ([output 2.2<sup>9</sup>](#)). This will (i) ensure locally customized monitoring, adaptive management and long-term sustainability of the approaches taken, (ii) secure timely reporting, and (iii) help building trust with financial actors to encourage future implementation. By building strong synergies with the FERM, the SIDS Flagship will also pioneer further development of monitoring approaches applicable to marine ecosystems for upscaling. Also, this component will enable the effective implementation and management of local restoration/conservation measures through the promotion of well-coordinated local governance structures across sectors and institutions, facilitating the joined-up ridge to reef & seascape management approach at target sites ([output 2.3<sup>10</sup>](#)) to ensure impact and sustainability of restoration/conservation efforts (output 2.1). Finally, Component 2 will develop bankable largescale marine and coastal ecosystem restoration and conservation project proposals ([output 2.4<sup>11</sup>](#)) in view to upscale/replicate successful joined-up ridge to reef & seascape restoration/conservation efforts based on preliminary results and lessons from this project.

**Component 3 (Policy Dialogue, Peer learning & SIDS-SIDS Cooperation)** will promote policy dialogue, joint advocacy, success stories, peer learning, SIDS-SIDS cooperation within and between the 3 SIDS regions. As such this third component fully contributes the global movement on ecosystem restoration the UN Decade is establishing to catalyze restoration initiatives, political will, exchange of knowledge, and cross-sectoral collaboration. Lessons learned and best practices from the 3 targeted SIDS will be showcased in international and regional events ([output 3.1<sup>12</sup>](#)) and will contribute to the overall SIDS advocacy efforts. Example of targeted events will be the upcoming SIDS International Conference, UN

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<sup>5</sup> Supported by MPTF Outcome 2 - Output 2.4. on Sustainable private sector support

<sup>6</sup> Supported by MPTF Outcome 2- Output 2.1 on Policy reforms

<sup>7</sup> Synergies with MPTF Outcome 3 on Monitoring

<sup>8</sup> Supported by MPTF Outcome 2 - Output 2.6 on Scaling up ER in the field

<sup>9</sup> In synergy with MPTF Outcome 3 on Monitoring

<sup>10</sup> Supported by MPTF Outcome 2 - Output 2.6 on Scaling up ER in the field

<sup>11</sup> Supported by MPTF Outcome 2 - Output 2.7 on Resource mobilization

<sup>12</sup> Supported by MPTF Outcome 2- Output 2.2 on Regional dialogues

Oceans Conference, Water Conference, UNEA, HLPF, Youth Forum COPs, International Days, Ocean Science Decade, UN Decade’s partnership with the Global Landscapes Forum. Ultimately and indirectly, this dynamic will prepare the ground for increased public and private investments in SIDS. Under this component, a compendium of knowledge, lessons learned, high-quality multimedia communication and storytelling assets, and best practice on SIDS ecosystem restoration for economic recovery and growth (and all the outputs above) will be produced (**output 3.2<sup>13</sup>**) and disseminated using, inter alia, the opportunity of international and regional events as well as collaborations with media houses, mainstream film-makers, artists and other amplifiers. This component will also organize project awards events each year to draw attention on projects featuring innovative and best practices in ecosystem restoration for economic recovery and growth in SIDS (**output 3.3<sup>14</sup>**). As an early boost, the SIDS flagship will feature heavily in the 2022 Flagship Nomination and Selection Campaign coordinated by the UN Decade Team and the 80+ partner organizations. The Flagship will be given special attention and feature prominently on the UN Decade’s digital hub. Finally, this component will also promote SIDS Youth engagement programmes through blue pride campaigns and art contests under the theme e.g. “blue restoration for economic recovery in SIDS” in view to incentivize youth groups and raise awareness about the cause of restoration and conservation, particularly in a COVID-19 era (**output 3.4<sup>15</sup>**). These campaigns will be embedded in and supported by the UN Decade’s global communication work and campaigns, such as the collaboration with Streetart for Mankind, the Nature-Positive University Network, the media network for restoration, and the planned production of targeted educational material, among others. Each of these global campaign mechanisms will have a special focus on official UN Decade flagships, including the SIDS Flagship.

#### 4.3. Description of Outcomes and menu of Outputs - country by country

The Table below presents the SIDS Flagship outcomes and associated (menu of) outputs, country by country, and underlines specific intervention sites when those have already been identified, at least tentatively in the targeted SIDS. Each outcome corresponds to one of the components described in the previous section. Also the linkages to the MPTF Outcomes 1 and 3 are explicitly highlighted.

The inception phase (see sub-section 6.1 for further details) will use the table below as a **starting point for discussion at national level**. The table provides a **non-exhaustive and tentative menu of options to be carefully assessed, designed, and agreed with full engagement of national governments, local authorities, and other partners** in order to jointly develop the details of country-level interventions, including the selection of tools based on country priorities, and formulate associated nationally and locally owned workplans.

OUTCOMES AND TENTATIVE MENU OF OUTPUTS – COUNTRY BY COUNTRY	
<b>OUTCOME 1: MAINSTREAMING, INFORMED DECISION-MAKING &amp; INTEGRATED PLANNING</b>	
Increased SIDS capacities and awareness in the use of decision support tools to assist policy makers, private sector and managers to better reflect the people, planet, and prosperity related outcomes of intended marine and coastal ecosystem restoration/conservation for blue economic recovery along the coast in target SIDS by analyzing different policy and investment scenarios.	
<b>Output 1.1. At local level</b> , marine and coastal ecosystem services valuation and accounting, policy coherence, and return on investments analysis on ecosystem	<b>Saint Lucia:</b> Ecosystem service assessment and marine spatial planning to support establishment of a new marine protected seascape along the south-east coast <sup>16</sup> , incl. blue economy transition planning and decision-support guiding MPA zoning plans that reconcile conservation objectives with use of coastal resources (fisheries and blue tourism)

<sup>13</sup> Supported by MPTF Outcome 2- Output 2.3 on KM

<sup>14</sup> Supported by MPTF Outcome 2- Output 2.2 on Regional dialogues

<sup>15</sup> Each SIDS Flagship output under component 3 will be delivered in synergy with MPTF Outcome 1 - Advocacy & Communication.

<sup>16</sup> Extension from the Pointe Sable Environmental Protection Area (PSEPA)

restoration for economic recovery are supported and presented to relevant national institutions (across relevant sectors) to guide policy, decision-making and planning	<b>Vanuatu:</b> Return on investment analysis of different coastal restoration options (including in mangrove social-environmental systems) and associated training and scenarios presentations provided to decision-makers and relevant stakeholders (including private sector investors) / across sectors
	<b>Comoros:</b> Ecosystem service assessment and participatory marine spatial planning to enable informed, holistic management of new proposed Marine Protected Areas and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (MPAs, OECMs), including sharing of conservation/restoration benefits among local stakeholders in context of sustainable blue economy transition.
<b>Output 1.2. At local level,</b> coastal ecotourism businesses are supported to integrate nature-related financial risks / opportunities into their business plans in view to facilitate their access to blue finance provided by banks, insurers and investors	<b>Saint Lucia and Comoros:</b> Tourism businesses are trained in de-risking and protecting their private investment in blue tourism by integrating nature-related financial risks/opportunities in business investment plans and setting up conservation and ecosystem restoration objectives (eco-tourism practices) in their own tourism business models.
	<b>Vanuatu:</b> Tourism businesses (including diving, hotel and cruise industry) are trained to improve the inclusion of mangrove, coastal and watershed restoration/conservation as part of their business plans and support the integration of nature-related financial risks/opportunities in the developing of their objectives.
<b>Output 1.3. At national level,</b> policy reform measures supported at national level to enable the upscaling of marine and coastal restoration and conservation for blue recovery and the transition to sustainable, resilient and equitable blue economy.	<b>1 SIDS (tbc):</b> A national Sustainable Blue Economy Integrated Policy roadmap is developed and supported, based on the analysis of policy and finance options available as well as baseline conditions (applying the Sustainable Blue Economy Transition Framework and associated SBE Financing Principles)
	<b>1 SIDS (tbc):</b> A national plan for mainstreaming Natural Capital Accounting into statistical production process is supported through the development of pilot accounts and methodologies to support the formulation of evidence-based sustainable blue economy policies. <i>NB: Some SIDS are initiating activities towards implementation of ocean accounts with the support of the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership.</i>
<b>Output 1.4.</b> Local monitoring systems for Saint Lucia, Comoros and Vanuatu strengthened to include environmental and social benefits linked to national monitoring programs and the FERM for planning interventions and monitoring global environmental commitments. ⇒ <i>Synergies with the MPTF Outcome 3 on Monitoring and Reporting</i>	
<b>OUTCOME 2: MARINE RESTORATION ACTIONS, INTEGRATED GOVERNANCE &amp; RESOURCE MOBILIZATION</b> Increased SIDS capacities to (i) restore/conservate and monitor identified marine and coastal ecosystems for economic recovery and blue growth, (ii) enhance integrated local blue recovery governance structure across sectors and institutions, customizing a connected ridge to reef and seascape management approach to ensure sustainability of local restoration/conservation efforts, and (iii) catalyze further investments to upscale/replicate successful connected ridge to reef and seascape restoration/conservation efforts.	
<b>Output 2.1.</b> As a contribution to economic recovery and growth, targeted scalable pilot marine and coastal ecosystem restoration / conservation measures will be supported in terms of sound design, implementation, and monitoring through strategic partnerships	<b>Saint Lucia:</b> A public-private partnership is developed with the tourism sector in the proposed south-east coast MPA to restore and conserve identified critical ecosystems (guided by output 1.1 and 1.2) through the development of nature-based eco-tourism activities and guidelines in the area.
	<b>Vanuatu:</b> Mangrove and coastal restoration supported and upscaled through targeted technical training on best practices and public-private partnerships, including restoration incentives linked to carbon and biodiversity credits or payment for ecosystem services
	<b>Comoros:</b> Payment for ecosystem service schemes developed with the tourism sector to contribute to covid recovery based on new Marine Protected Areas (supported by to GEF WIOSAP) that underpins eco-tourism in biodiversity hot-spots (identified by output 1.1)
<b>Saint Lucia, Comoros, Vanuatu:</b> Technical assistance provided for participatory long-term ecological monitoring of coastal ecosystems, coral reefs, mangroves and seagrass	

	in restoration sites and synergies sought with global ecological monitoring systems such as the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network.
<b>Output 2.2.</b> Monitoring and reporting, based on the FERM, ensures the monitoring, adaptive management and long-term sustainability of the approaches taken in Saint Lucia, Comoros and Vanuatu. ⇒ <i>Synergies with the MPTF Outcome 3 on Monitoring and Reporting</i>	
<b>Output 2.3.</b> Integrated policy frameworks and governance structures for blue recovery are developed and customized for restoration and conservation action at target sites engaging stakeholders in joined-up-ridge to reef and seascape planning and management.	<b>Saint Lucia, Comoros, Vanuatu:</b> Integrated policy frameworks and governance structures for blue recovery* are developed and customized for restoration and conservation action at target sites engaging stakeholders in joined-up-ridge to reef and seascape planning and management, reducing upstream and local pressures on coastal ecosystems, whilst enhancing overall impact and sustainability of marine and coastal restoration actions. *Guided by UNEP Sustainable Blue Economy Transition Framework and other tools.
<b>Output 2.4.</b> the development of large scale bankable marine and coastal ecosystem projects are supported in view to upscale/replicate successful connected ridge to reef and seascape restoration/conservation efforts	<b>Saint Lucia:</b> GEF 8 proposal development supported to assist the south-east coast MPA with the development of (i) a sustainable financing plan, (ii) a REDD+ scheme for mangrove restoration and (iii) the strengthening of the national MPA network with the integration of the new declared MPA and OECMs.
	<b>Comoros:</b> GEF 8 proposal on <i>Sustainable Ocean Plans</i> that enables effective MPAs and OECMs within broader land-sea management, restoring mangrove and seagrass ecosystems for carbon sequestration, climate financing and national climate change mitigation commitments
	<b>Vanuatu:</b> Major proposal to support the upscaling of the public/private partnerships developed under 2.1 for sustainable restoration/conservation and covid recovery
<b>OUTCOME 3: POLICY DIALOGUE, PEER LEARNING &amp; SIDS-SIDS COOPERATION</b> Increased SIDS-to SIDS peer learning and policy dialogue to join forces and channel SIDS voice as “one” in international fora to communicate successful stories and advocate for SIDS unique marine and coastal nature-based opportunities and challenges in unlocking a blue recovery and growth. ⇒ <i>Each output below will be delivered in synergy with MPTF Outcome 1 on Advocacy and Communication</i>	
<b>Output 3.1.</b> Policy dialogues, knowledge exchange, advocacy efforts, and peer learning amid SIDS on connected ridge to reef and seascape ecosystem restoration/conservation for economic recovery (best practice and lessons learned on blue tourism practice for conservation) are facilitated and strengthened through webinars, conferences including (side-)events organized at regional and inter-regional levels. The SIDS Flagship will feature prominently on the UN Decade’s virtual hub, stimulating further networking and support by external actors.	
<b>Output 3.2.</b> A compendium of knowledge, lessons learned and best practice on SIDS ecosystem restoration/conservation for blue economic recovery and growth produced. Knowledge learned and stories gathered will be communicated through high-quality multimedia productions, local and global media engagement and the collaboration with film-makers, artists and other external amplifiers of the UN Decade, reaching a mass audience nationally and internationally.	
<b>Output 3.3.</b> SIDS ER/conservation project awards events organized to feature innovative measures and best practices in ridge to reef and seascape management for restoration/conservation for economic recovery and growth in SIDS. As first boost, the SIDS flagship will be announced publicly through a high-profile campaign in 2022, culminating in a virtual Launch Gala planned alongside UNGA and accompanied by national, regional and global media engagement.	
<b>Output 3.4.</b> SIDS Youth engagement programmes will be organized in the 3 SIDS regions in the form of blue pride campaigns and art contests under the theme e.g. “blue restoration for economic recovery in SIDS” in view to incentivize youth groups and raise awareness about the cause of restoration. SIDS formal and informal education institutions will feature in the Decade’s “Nature-Positive University Network” and benefit from restoration curriculum development.	

**5. Expected long term results**

**5.1. Contribution to the 10 principles of ecosystem restoration**

This SIDS Flagship is heavily based on the [Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Principles and associated Sustainable Blue Economy Transition Framework enabling and de-risking investments](#), which provides a foundational keystone to invest in the ocean economy. By essence, the proposal fully contributes to the [10 principles of ecosystem restoration](#) as follows:

**Principle 6 (Knowledge Integration)** will be applied through Component 3 that will support the presentation and dissemination of SIDS relevant knowledge, lessons learned and best practice on ecosystem restoration amid and between SIDS regions, through dedicated SIDS webinars, knowledge products, various international events (Ocean Conference, SIDS International Conference, Youth Forum, Water Conference, UNEA, HLPF, COPs, etc) and other UN Decades (Decade on Ocean Science, Water Decade etc)

**Principle 7 (Measurable Goals)** and **Principles 8 (Local Seascape contexts)** will be guaranteed by component 1 that will provide data and decision support tools to assist policy makers, private sector and managers to better grasp the people, planet, and prosperity related outcomes of intended marine and coastal ecosystem restoration/conservation for economic recovery along the coast by analyzing different investment scenarios. This will be key to set targets tailored to the local context and specific health of ecosystems targeted (no-one-size-fits-all) and promote a **continuum of activities (Principle 3)** adapted to the reality on the ground.

**Principle 9 (Monitoring and Management)** will be ensured already at the planning phase (Component 1), and mainly through component 2 that will directly support Marine & Coastal Restoration/Conservation Actions (the core of the Flagship) while ensuring continuous monitoring of the interventions are carried out, and integrated into the UN Decade's Framework for Ecosystem Restoration Monitoring (FERM). When needed, adaptative management practices will be encouraged. Further development of existing monitoring methods adapted to the region, and potentially scalable also to other island environments, will be collected and disseminated (Components 2 & 3).

**Principle 1 (Global Contribution), Principle 5 (Addressing Causes of Degradation), Principle 4 (Benefits to Nature and People), and Principle 10 (Policy integration)** are fully considered through the overall ridge to reef and seascape management holistic approach of the project as well as the project strategy which is designed to (i) connect marine restoration/conservation and economic recovery/development along the coast, (ii) provide methods and technologies for deciding where and how to invest in restoration to deliver environmentally sound blue economic opportunities, and (iii) link local level efforts (pilot) to national level structural changes – strategic policy reform measures. In addition, principle 10 and its recognition that financing will determine the long-term success of an initiative will be further supported by this proposal through the development of sustainable finance and catalyze further investments to upscale/replicate ridge to reef and seascape restoration/conservation efforts.

**Principle 2 (Broad Engagement)** will be followed through the 3 components of the proposal to ensure proper ownership at every level. While relevant Government entities will be involved to facilitate inter-ministerial collaboration, private sector entities particularly in the tourism and fisheries sectors, as well as community-based organizations in selected sites will be fully integrated into the decision-making process. The Flagship will particularly pay attention to the voices of underrepresented and marginalized groups, such as indigenous peoples, women and youth. In addition, through Component 3, the Flagship will ensure that SIDS that are not targeted by this proposal also benefit from the knowledge and experience generated by this project.

## 5.2. Other impacts, including impact on biodiversity, climate change action and livelihoods

Coastal and marine habitats provide homes for marine animals, foraging and nursery grounds for fish and shellfish, nesting and stopover areas for birds and other animals, as well as essential food for coastal communities and more. Approximately 3 billion people in the world rely on wild-caught and farmed seafood as a primary source of protein, and seagrass ecosystems alone sustain about 20% of the world's largest fisheries. Coral reef are exceptionally biodiverse ecosystems, covering only 0.1% of the world's ocean floor but containing at least 25% of marine species. Coastal ecosystems also provide a buffer against the forces of nature, dampening the destructive effects of wind, waves, and floods, with mangroves and coral reef providing effective natural seawalls. The project is expected to avoid the degradation and steer the

restoration of significant coastal and marine areas allowing for the conservation of biodiversity, sustainable access to food and substantial protection against natural disaster. Moreover apart from supporting adaptation to climate change, coastal ecosystem recovery is a big part of the mitigation equation. Indeed, recent studies showed that mangrove soil held around 6.4 billion metric tons of carbon in 2000. The results also indicate that between 2000 and 2015, up to 122 million tons of this carbon was released due to mangrove forest loss. Preventing loss and replanting mangrove has a major impact on the Carbon balance and climate change mitigation. Intertidal saltmarshes and seagrass meadows have similarly been shown to contain large stores of carbon. By supporting key industries, such as fisheries and tourism, to become more sustainable by caring for the very resource they depend on, key local economic activities can provide jobs and revenues on the long term. For example, in 2018 an estimated 59.5 million people globally were engaged in the primary sector of fisheries (39 million) and aquaculture (20.5 million).

### 5.3. Demonstration value, replicability, potential multiplier and learning value

The SIDS Flagship aims to demonstrate all the benefits of coastal and marine habitats protection and restoration and integrate these activities in national planning and policy and private sector business plans. By doing so, the success of pilot projects leading to more sustainable businesses and coastal communities will be immediately replicated. By using a series of tools to better integrate restoration into national processes, and monitor success, the multiplier effect is embedded in the project itself. Also country-level interventions will be particularly bridging recurrent and ongoing marine restoration/conservation project gaps which are often undermining replication and proper upscaling of restoration/conservation efforts. Investment in further adaptation and development of monitoring tools and approaches will help ensuring that improved monitoring will be available also to other initiatives. Replicability will also be supported by using regional networks of SIDS to share experiences and best practices. Development of best practice guidelines and communications strategies for replication of activities will be part of the Flagship.

The SIDS Flagship will cover 3 regions and Component 3 is fully dedicated to peer learning and shared knowledge amid and within SIDS regions to allow the SIDS countries to have a stronger voice on coastal and marine restoration issues.

### 5.4. Scalability and strategy for mobilizing additional funding

Resource mobilization is one of the key activities of this proposal. It will be done through supporting either funding proposal, or bankable projects or the establishment of system like payments for ecosystem service including ERR. As the blue and green activities will be part of national plans and strategy they will also be supported more naturally by national budgets. Furthermore, SIDS partners will be supported to develop larger-scale proposals to larger funds such as the Global Environment Facility or the Green Climate Fund.

## 6. Tentative Budget

Based on preliminary calculations, the tentative budget amount for a 3-4 year Flagship is 5.0 million USD. A detailed budget will be elaborated during the inception phase in cooperation with national and regional partners.

### 7. Budget proposal for 2022

#### 7.1. Budget for scoping, inception and design of full project

An inception phase of about USD 200.000 will be planned in Q1-Q2 2022. This will be co-funded by two sources: **USD 124.976 through MPTF** (a fraction of the total USD 5.000.000). If travels are not allowed, the budget will be significantly reduced. The budget breakdown is as follows:

Budget Categories	USD TOTAL
1 Staff and other personnel costs	38.400
5 Travels	63.600
X External services	20.000

7 General operating & other direct costs	2.976
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>124.976</b>

UNEP will allocate additional 75.000 USD in co-financing for this initiative

The inception phase will use the table in section 3.3. as **starting point for scoping discussion at national level**. The table provides a **non-exhaustive menu of options to be carefully assessed with full engagement of national governments, local authorities, and other partners** in order to jointly develop the details of country-level interventions.

Practically and in collaboration with national partners but also the UN Decade's Monitoring Task team and Communication team, the scoping exercise will jointly:

- Confirm SIDS country selection by assessing the level of political commitment at national level.
- Identify and delimitate the targeted site(s) in each of the selected SIDS by selecting sites with the highest restoration potential to show-case results and promote replicability/scalability.
- Mapping of existing relevant regional, national, sub-national policies, frameworks and legislation that should be considered by the SIDS Flagship in order to leverage positive impact.
- Undertake a stakeholder analysis and carry out a rapid capacity (needs) assessment in view to calibrate the technical assistance and capacity building efforts needed and the type of partnerships arrangements required for optimal delivery and impact.
- Thanks to the above, stakeholders interaction validate or modify and detail the activities to be undertaken for each outcome.
- Identify interventions that will be supported by the UN Decade's Small Grant Facility, mainly interventions under component 2.
- Gender, environment and social risk assessment and management plan prepared according to chapter 9 in 5 - year Programme.
- Confirm the most appropriate tools and technologies that this project will promote based on targeted sites, stakeholder's capacity, national contexts and priorities.
- Identify the most suitable monitoring tools & approaches in line with FERM and associated team.
- Agree and develop national level communication and advocacy roadmap for country-specific level activities to be implemented in cooperation with the UN Decade's Communication team.
- Develop the full-fledged proposal with clear country focused workplans and global milestones.

Full terms of reference will be elaborated at the initiation of the inception phase.