Participatory Integrated Coastal Zone Management Planning for the island of Rodrigues (Republic of Mauritius)

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Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) is a holistic planning and management process through which sustainable development of the coastal and marine environment and associated resources can be achieved. The process is well suited to islands where the coordination of terrestrial and marine planning processes is particularly crucial. On the island of Rodrigues (Republic of Mauritius) the EU funded ProGeCo/ ReCoMap project provided support in 2007 to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to establish an ICZM Committee. ReCoMap provided training, built ICZM capacity and strengthened policy development, planning processes, monitoring and reporting. An ICZM Action Plan was drafted and other activities included training in Oil Spill Management, sensitisation about domestic waste and waste management and mangrove replanting. Although Rodrigues has made progress since, including the banning of plastic bags in 2015 and a commitment to become 100% renewable by 2030, the ICZM Committee had been inactive. A new project initiated through the Indian Ocean Commission with funding from Fonds Français pour l’Environnement Mondial aims to re-energise the local ICZM Committee. The project is facilitating the preparation of an up-to-date ICZM Action plan to capture current priorities based upon best practice approaches for sustainable development that can be implemented collaboratively by different stakeholders (e.g. governmental associations, private investors, communities, donors). The ICZM Action Plan is being drafted through a series of technical 'writing' workshops, during which ICZM Committee members and other key stakeholders are responsible for writing sections of the Action Plan. To date, a vision, goal and key objectives have been drafted and priority areas for intervention identified. Next steps will refine the actions, agree on responsibilities, the workplan and budget. Adopting a highly participatory approach, engaging the ICZM Committee and others in the preparation of the ICZM Action Plan will increase ownership and the likelihood that the plan will be validated and implemented at both the local and national level.