

PAPUA NEW GUINEA MADANG

Protecting a national treasure

Madang boasts a natural treasure trove so rich that it is considered one of the most biodiverse regions on the planet. However, as with other areas of lush biodiversity, the coastal province has become prey to exploitation such as overfishing, forest conversion and – more recently – the construction of the Pacific Marine Industrial Zone. Local and indigenous communities have found themselves in a desperate fight to generate income and improve their livelihoods as they face ever-deteriorating natural resources.

CHARACTERISTICS

2.9 million ha

is the size of Madang Province.

1,300

different species of fish and spectacular coral reefs can be found in Madang's waters.

493,900

people, who speak 173 languages, are estimated to live in Madang Province.

\$170 million

was the estimated value of bycatch caught by commercial fisheries in PNG, in 2012.

Vulnerable livelihoods

Communities surrounding the Madang Lagoon have become almost wholly reliant on marine resources for their livelihoods as land availability is limited due to coastal erosion and overpopulation.

MADANG

Madang Province is situated on the north coast of Papua New Guinea and faces onto the Bismarck Sea.



NOTABLE WINS & KEY LESSONS



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BEYOND FISHERIES: ALTERNATIVE INCOME SOURCES

Many Madang residents do not view fishing as a sustainable income source and therefore many community members, particularly women, expressed desires to establish their own micro-enterprises. To support this, WWF and partners helped to establish microfinance organisations linked to banks and also supported training in financial literacy, through the Meri Helpim Meri Foundation. Women involved in the programme were encouraged to apply for small loans via community based organisations (CBOs), which enabled a communal approach to saving and business growth. This method suited the culture of the people, who strongly believe in looking after one another. Many successful business owners have largely moved away from fishing to focus on running their enterprises. Those who have chosen to continue to fish for a living have also learned to better manage their money, and some have even branched into more lucrative businesses such as providing boat transport or running guesthouses. As livelihoods improve, there is gradual reduction in pressure on fisheries resources.

“During the time of my grandparents until my parents’ time, there were a lot of fish in the sea. Enough for me to eat and enough for me to sell. But today it is not the same – there is not enough fish and not enough land.”

Vivianne Pileng
Siar, Madang Lagoon

WWF'S APPROACH IN MADANG

- Introducing Inshore Fish Aggregating Devices (IFADs) to help encourage pelagic fish into the lagoon and take the pressure away from the declining reef fish stocks
- Establishing community-based microfinance organisations to kick-start additional income streams
- Providing education programmes to empower communities to manage their marine environment and prevent further degradation of habitats
- Facilitating rehabilitation of mangrove forests to raise awareness and build interest in communities about the value of mangroves for healthy fisheries

WWF implements its work in Madang in collaboration with the National Fisheries Authority, Madang Provincial Fisheries, Meri Helpim Meri Foundation, National Development Bank, People's Micro Bank, and the Tupira Surf Club.