

SOLOMON ISLANDS WESTERN PROVINCE

Sustainable coastal communities

In Solomon Islands, a nation where less than one per cent of land and sea areas are protected, the mission to promote and implement sustainable fisheries regulations and community-based resource management plans across Western Province may sound daunting. However, demand for the country's fish stocks is expected to outstrip supply by 2030, making conservation efforts a matter of being able to put food on the table.

CHARACTERISTICS

By 2030

Western Province aims to implement a rights-based approach to fisheries co-management, enabling the sustainable, fair and legal use of natural resources and an improvement in food security and livelihoods.

In 1998

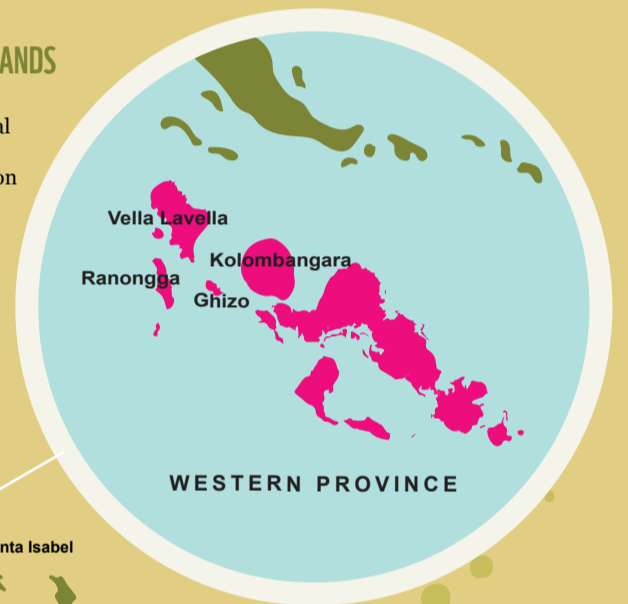
the Ghizo Marine Conservation Area (GMCA) was established to protect Ghizo and its surrounding islands' rich coral reef ecosystems.

2007 Tsunami

The disaster, which struck Western Province, washed away homes, took numerous lives, destroyed reefs and as a result, halted conservation efforts for some time.

WESTERN PROVINCE, SOLOMON ISLANDS

WWF-Solomon Islands' marine conservation work focuses on the central northwestern part of Western Province, the country's largest province. The region includes: Ghizo, Kolombangara, Vella Lavella and Ranongga Islands.



NOTABLE WINS & KEY LESSONS



WOMEN SAVING FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

WWF's financial inclusion activities and workshops are having an extraordinary impact on the livelihoods and empowerment of women, leading to the launch of 120 new businesses and many more enterprises that meet environmental sustainability criteria. At the end of the 2016 financial year, there were 742 savings club members across seven zones, having saved a total of SBD \$270,650 (US\$34,765), and withdrawn a total of SBD \$125,659 (US\$16,141). WWF is now focusing on training local women from the established savings clubs to conduct financial literacy, microfinance and small business training in more communities to help establish new savings clubs. In addition to the direct economic and social benefits to these women, their families and communities, there are early indications that the income generated through these initiatives is reducing household dependency on over-exploited coastal fisheries.



RECOGNIZING COMPLEXITIES TO ADDRESS GAPS

A major lesson learned in the Solomon Islands' marine programme was the complexity of its various projects. Additional education and training are often required to help build community capacity in order to implement project objectives. WWF worked with and trained communities to conduct Spawning Potential Surveys (SPS) and monitoring activities which required explanations on scientific fish names to ease the process of data gathering. Meanwhile, WWF worked to break down the complexities of Inshore Fish Aggregating Devices (IFADs) maintenance by creating an IFAD manual with easy to understand language, instructions and a visual guide.

"The reef is always in my heart. Everywhere I go I try to educate people, including my family, about protecting the reef... We all live together, and we must work together to preserve our resources for the future."

Nuatali Veniyy
Ghizo Island resident

WWF'S APPROACH IN WESTERN PROVINCE

- Promoting sustainable fisheries through innovative community-based, participatory approaches to fish-stock assessments and private sector partnerships while working with government authorities to increase local capacity and formalize community-based fisheries co-management plans
- Supporting sustainable community livelihoods by offering new opportunities through financial inclusion and women's empowerment
- Facilitating ridge-to-reef community planning, including participatory resource mapping, emphasizing the interconnections of ecosystems and how the activities occurring in terrestrial areas — the ridge — impact the reef below