

# Integrating environment into policy, planning and decision making

**It is critical that environmental concerns are integrated into restoration planning at the earliest possible stage. This includes influencing policy both at national and local levels.**

Results from IUCN's post-tsunami environmental assessments have been continuously influencing policy and decision-making authorities. A special committee for Environment was set up within TAFREN (Task Force For Rebuilding the Nation) soon after the tsunami. TAFREN is the government authority coordinating post-tsunami restoration work.

## **Represented**

IUCN was represented in TAFREN and the results of all environmental assessments were channelled through this body. In addition, early assessments were made of the effect of the tsunami on the National Parks of Sri Lanka. These assessments were used by the Department of Wildlife Conservation Sri Lanka to determine the necessary remedial action.

## **Best Practice Guidelines**

A set of Best Practice Guidelines for Environmentally Friendly Post-tsunami Restoration has also been published by IUCN. These papers provide useful step-by-step information to guide restoration. In addition they act as useful documents for government and local government agencies to take informed policy decisions. The Guidelines have thus been widely circulated amongst decision-making bodies.

## **Decision-making**

Influencing policy and decision making needs to be a continuous process. Thus, under the Green Coast Project, IUCN is working closely with (local) governments, local NGOs and CBOs to integrate results of the assessments and lessons learned from the Small Grants Programme into decision-making. Workshops, policy briefs and papers are being conducted and distributed amongst a wide audience as a mechanism to ensure this.

## **Policy Programmes under review by IUCN for the Green Coast Project**

**There is an urgent need to ensure that post-tsunami reconstruction is carried out in a timely and equitable manner with reference to existing laws and regulations as well as to proposed laws and new policies.**

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### 1. Guidelines for coastal reservation green belts in Sri Lanka

- An initiative made by the Coast Conservation Department (CCD) in response to post-tsunami rehabilitation. This was produced by a technical committee comprised of representatives from CCD, UDA, Central Environment Authority (CEA), Dept. of Botanical Gardens, Forest Department (FD) and CCB.
- It will benefit those who intend to undertake landscape regeneration projects in the coastal setback, and it goes into details on planning aspects in the tsunami hit coastal belt.
- Framework is being revised to address inadequacies found in the guidelines in areas such as sustainability criterion, gender dimension in project cycle and community ownership and user rights.

### 2. Strategy and program for reconstruction and development of the marine fisheries sector

Initiated by the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resource (MFAR)

Comprehensive, broad and a complete approach to overcoming the issues towards the development of the sector

Implementation of the program will seek to be in conformity with the FAO code of conduct for Responsible Fisheries

Fall in line with the country's National Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Millennium Development Goals Strategy

Complies with the Green Coast Recovery Principles except for not enough emphasis is given to the gender dimension of livelihoods

3. Strategy for establishment of nurseries for greening the reconstruction and restoration projects (under "Green canopy for new settlements" program)

Initiated by the tsunami Housing Reconstruction Unit (THRU/UDA)

Developed in lieu of the high projected demand of plants, for the greening of lands used for housing reconstructions, and a number of upcoming projects on restoration of natural vegetation

The focus is on supporting livelihoods (and creating new livelihood options) for the tsunami affected people through the establishment of these nurseries.