



## From the editors

By Peter Edwards and Maria Pena

Happy New Year to one and all we wish for everyone a happy and healthy 2013! May your conservation efforts bear fruit! This edition will probably be short and sweet, as we get back into the swing of things post Holiday and New Years celebrations.

A few things to note. Members of the SocMon family attended the 65<sup>th</sup> Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI), 5–9 November in Santa Marta, Colombia. There was a dedicated marine protected areas session at the conference in which the preliminary results of four of the Caribbean Challenge SocMon project sites were presented. This was well received.

Throughout the meeting there were other side sessions and working groups that focused on the human dimensions aspect of Caribbean reef and fisheries management including the first ever held Socio-economic Café which aimed to provide GCFI members who had an interest in the socio-economic aspects of aquatic resource management with the opportunity to gather informally and talk about common interests with folks who work in the field. We also met with colleagues from Brazil, who are very interested in incorporating SocMon methods to gather well needed baseline information on coastal communities. This information could prove very useful as they face challenges with respect to potential impacts to local communities from industrial fishing pressure on key fisheries.

By now most of the regional SocMon coordinators

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should have received an email from Peter Edwards with ideas about potential ways forward for SocMon as well as asking for valuable feedback and input. The conversations will continue as we work to make SocMon even more relevant to coastal management and decision making.

We look forward to hearing of your good work as the year progresses.

*Peter and Maria*

## CC SocMon ends in February

By Maria Pena

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) funded *Socio-economic Monitoring by Caribbean Challenge MPA managers (CC SocMon)* project terminates at the end of February. As a result, sites have been busily wrapping-up data analysis and have held or are currently planning to hold community validation meetings. Reporting is progressing smoothly.



Some of the South Coast Marine Conservation Area SocMon team members during a planning meeting, 18 January, St. Vincent. L to R: Sternley Walker, Andrew Lockhart and Bernard John.

Throughout January, Maria Pena (Project Manager) and Katherine Blackman (Assistant SocMon Trainer) visited Grenada, St. Vincent and St. Lucia to provide technical assistance in data analysis and reporting to the Molinière–Beauséjour MPA (MBMPA) and Woburn/Clarke’s Court Bay (WCCB MPA), Grenada; South Coast Marine Conservation Area (SCMCA), St. Vincent; and Soufriere Marine Management Area (SMMA) and Pitons Management Area (PMA), St. Lucia.



MBMPA SocMon team members spreading the word about the upcoming validation meetings in MPA communities.



Site visit to the Pitons Management Area with members of the SMMA/PMA SocMon team, 30 January. L to R: Maria Pena, Augustine Dominique (PMA Manager) and Nadia Cazaubon (Project Officer, SMMA). In the background: Gros Piton

Site visits to the Sandy Island Oyster Bed (Grenada), Tobago Cays Marine Park (St. Vincent) and the Pointe Sable Environmental Protection Area (St. Lucia) will occur next month. The project is implemented by the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus Barbados.

## ***Taking SocMon forward in South Asia***

*By Vineeta Hoon*

Dissemination of SocMon information and getting feedback has been the major challenge at the five sites in South Asia.

Mr. Manish Chandi from the Andaman and Nicobar (A&N) environment team reports that SocMon reports were sent to members of the local administration, participants of the SocMon exercise and also our fieldworkers. The A&N Forest Department has also accepted the report and it is hoped that it will be made use of in the compilation of the management plan for the Rani Jhansi Marine National Park, A&N Islands. Dive shops that participated in the exercise have also received a copy and an informal discussion was held with members from two dive shops on a monitoring mechanism. Changes in the management and in personnel at the dive shop impede this process as well as the fact that the number of tour operators has virtually doubled in some sectors. For instance, visitors to Elephant Beach who are invariably day trippers, are arriving in ever larger numbers, much beyond the capacity that the reef or beach can hold; the tour operators and speed boat operators are capitalizing on the inflow of tourists and income generation

overshadows any concern for the sustainability of the economic activity which even authorities claimed difficult to control. The Zoological Survey of India has also conducted a biological assessment of some of the reefs in the vicinity. The report has not yet been released. We hope to have a joint effort with other agencies next season after this information is made available for a consensus for reef management with all stakeholders identified during the SocMon exercise of 2011–2012.

Mr. Marirajan, the Executive Director of PAD, reports that the State Government has taken over the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve Trust as of 1 January, 2013. The Trust is a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project initiated in 2000 for the conservation and sustainable use of the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve's Coastal Biodiversity (GOMBRT). The project was initially planned for seven years and was later extended by three more years up to 31 December 2012. An announcement was made in the Tamil Nadu budget for 2012–13 that the government would continue to fund the Trust even after UNDP funding stops. The Trust will now be managed directly by the State Department of Environment and Forests. UNDP has withdrawn its staff team. Coastal activists say that as part of the management plan the State Government of Tamilnadu is going to implement a coastal eco-tourism project with support from the Asian Development Bank.

From Lakshadweep, Mr. K.G Mohammed, from the Maliku Development Society attended the Locally Managed Marine Area event at the IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC) 6–12 September, Jeju, Korea, as a representative of the Minicoy Islanders. He returned convinced that LMMAs are the way to go. He has been campaigning for

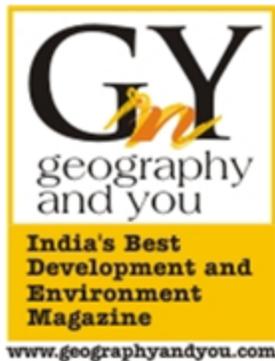
LMMAs in Lakshadweep. To get the point across he wrote and composed a skit called “Save us to Save you” which was enacted by students of the Navodya Vidyalaya at the Minicoy Fest held at Minicoy, 23–24 December 2012. They also put up a stall called “Protect or Perish” to promote awareness of the fragility of the Islands, mangroves and coral reefs. The festival was attended by over 10,000 people.



Students of the Navodya Vidyalaya performing “Save us to Save you” at the Minicoy Fest



Mr. K.G. Mohammed at the Protect or Perish stall at the Minicoy Fest



The *Geography and You* magazine published a special edition on Lakshadweep and included an article called *Livelihood Dependence on Marine Goods and Services and Changing Social Values in Lakshadweep*. For the full

article please visit the link:

<http://www.geographyandyou.com/xmag/index.html>\*

## ***Upcoming SocMon event in Belize, February 2013***

The Caribbean Marine Protected Area Management Network and Forum (CaMPAM) and the SocMon initiative for Central America are offering a SocMon

workshop in Belize. This workshop forms part of the project, *Implementing Capacity Building in the Mesoamerican Reef MPA Community*. Based on a regional assesment of management capacity needs at nine sites in the Central America region, CaMPAM identified a shared interest by the local organisations for the topic of socio-economic monitoring. We will offer a four-day workshop tailored to the specific needs of the region, covering three topical areas, including subjects such as participatory research methods, livelihoods strategies linked to SocMon and research planning. The main outcome of the workshop will be the design of SocMon assessments for each of the participating sites. The training is designed to include a follow-up program whereby support will be provided by the partnership to ensure the implementation of the SocMon approach.

## ***SocMon Coordinators at a glance***



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