

Marine Sanctuary and Forest Preserve, Chumbe Island, Tanzania

Full Description

Project Summary:

Background

Chumbe Island, a 55-acre, uninhabited island located about eight miles southwest of Zanzibar, Tanzania, is home to a rich natural environment. The island is blessed with coral rag forest and surrounded by coral reefs, which are home to more than 420 fish species and 200 hard coral species. However, the sensitive ecosystem was under threat from overfishing and overharvesting, which were contributing to the degradation of the marine environment.

Project Structure

A private company named Chumbe Island Coral Park Ltd (CICP) submitted an unsolicited proposal to the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar (RGoZ) for the establishment of a marine sanctuary and forest preserve in Chumbe Island. To gain political support for the proposal, CICP worked closely with seven government departments and garnered the support of the region's fishermen and local communities to get the project approved. In 1993, the CICP was given a 33-year land lease to develop eco-friendly bungalows and a visitors' center on 5.9 acres of land on Chumbe Island. In 1994, the RGoZ granted CICP exclusive management rights over the marine sanctuary for ten years and over the forest reserve for 33 years. In 2004, the marine contract was renewed for another ten year.

CICP provided about two-thirds of the initial capital investment for the project, totaling USD 1.2 million, with eco-friendly donors contributing the remainder. The operation and maintenance costs are between USD 150,000 and USD 200,000 per year. The revenue generated by small-scale eco-tourism to the island is sufficient to cover the costs of managing the sanctuary and preserve, research projects, conservation, and public education programs designed to generate support for the sanctuary.

The RGoZ maintains ownership of the marine areas and Chumbe Island, including CICP's developments, with the Zanzibar Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Natural Resources and the Zanzibar Ministry of Lands and Environment responsible for the direct supervision of the project.

Lessons Learned

Since 2000, CICP's operations on Chumbe Island have been fully self-sustaining. Latest available reports indicate that the number of visitors to the island reached only 40 percent of total capacity. The primary goal of the project is not to make a profit, but rather to achieve both financial and environmental sustainability. This means that, if the island were to reach full capacity, CICP could recover its investment and even fund a limited expansion in some areas.¹

Obtaining support from key stakeholders – in this case, the region's fishermen and local communities – is vital for the successful development and delivery of a project, even or especially when initiated as an unsolicited project proposal.

Footnote 1: Source(s) [https:// www.esc-pau.fr/ppp/ documents/featured_ projects/tanzania.pdf](https://www.esc-pau.fr/ppp/documents/featured_projects/tanzania.pdf), accessed 16 February 2019

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