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ISLAND INNOVATIONS

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UNDP and GEF: Leveraging the Environment for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

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Cover photo: A woman collects sea urchins at low tide in Comoros. Credit Zafer Kizilkaya.

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Foreword



HELEN CLARK



NAOKO ISHII

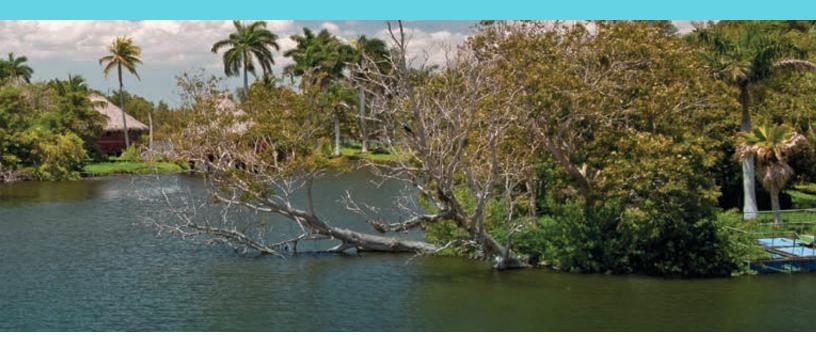
Small Island Developing States (SIDS) face extraordinary and unique sustainable development challenges as a result of their small size, remoteness, narrow resource and export base, and high dependency on imported fossil fuel. At the same time, SIDS are extraordinarily dependent on healthy ecosystems and a stable climate. Nature-based activities account for a large share of economic activity and job opportunities in SIDS.

Negative impacts from climate change, unsustainable use of natural resources, invasive species, pollution and other factors significantly exacerbate the sustainable development challenges facing SIDS. Indeed, for some SIDS, they pose an existential threat.

This publication, 'Island Innovations – UNDP and GEF: Leveraging the Environment for the Sustainable Development of SIDS', demonstrates that far from succumbing to these challenges, SIDS have time and again risen to the task of managing their fragile environments to meet their sustainable development goals. The examples included in this publication show that SIDS are confronting the challenges of sustainability and resilience head-on through a broad range of actions, including conservation and sustainable use of critical marine and coastal resources, climate change mitigation, adaptation efforts and more.

SIDS are pioneering integrated and inclusive approaches to sustainable development through comprehensive ridge-to-reef approaches that address the 'whole island' issues of conserving land, water and ocean resources while adapting to climate change, enhancing local capacity and generating economic growth.

The approaches and achievements emerging from SIDS provide important lessons that we can learn from as the world discusses a set of new sustainable development goals for the post-2015 period. The innovative and impactful projects that are included in this booklet show that their experiences are highly relevant for evaluating the effectiveness and efficacy of development innovations in the environment sector.



The Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), together with our other partners, are proud to have been working with SIDS during the past two decades in line with the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA) and the Mauritius Strategy (BPOA +10).

Going forward, as the international community identifies the priorities and Sustainable Development Goals for the post-2015 development agenda as well as a new climate change regime for the post-2020 period, we commit to further support SIDS in responding to the challenge of sustainable development by intensifying actions for the effective maintenance and protection of natural capital.

We will work as supporting partners to SIDS to expand and strengthen protected areas, integrate biodiversity and ecosystem management into key economic sectors and support ecosystem-based adaptation to and mitigation of climate change. We will promote access to sustainable energy and improved energy efficiency and help ensure effective risk management. This work will be reinforced by efforts to promote inclusive economic growth, effective governance and women's empowerment.

An integral part of these efforts is to strengthen the human resources of SIDS and build genuine and durable partnerships at the local, national and international levels, through greater South-South co-operation, more effective co-ordination and engagement with new partners on shared priorities.

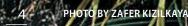
On the occasion of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, our message is clear: We stand ready to continue to support SIDS and their people to manage their unique environments for sustainable human development.

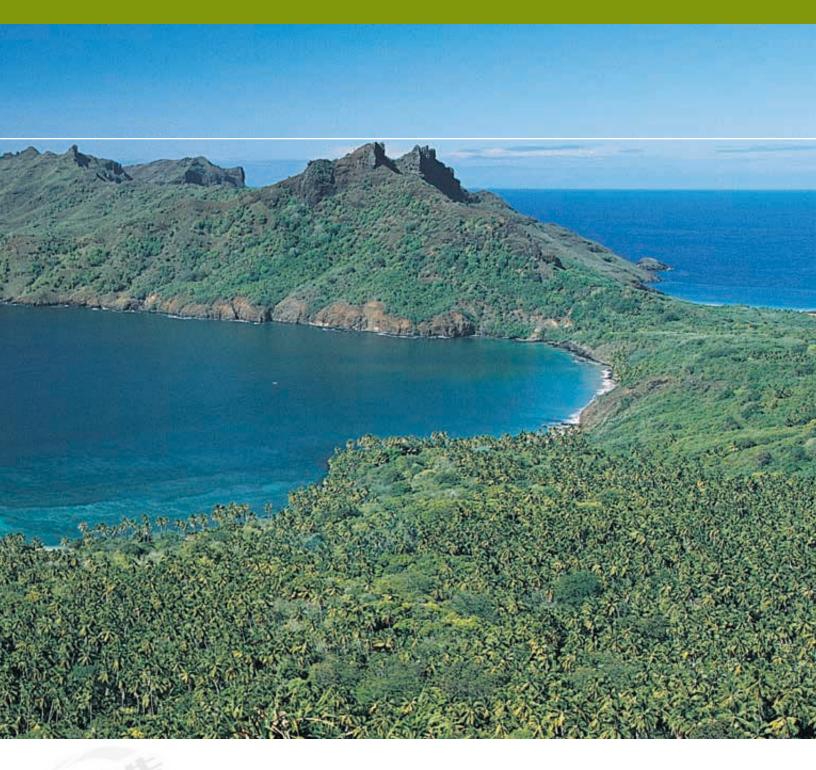
Helen Clark Administrator, United Nations Development Programme

Naoko Ishii Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility

Introduction

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