IWC11 Pre-Conference Workshops

Concept Note

Day 2: SIDS Inter-regional Dialogue

18 October 2026

09:00 – 15:00 Kuta, Bali

About IWC11 Pre-conference Workshops

The pre-conference workshops will provide the opportunity for a hands-on learning and exchange experience targeting GEF International Waters (IW) project managers, thematic specialists and GEF Agency representatives. Three workshops will take place on 17-18 October 2026 at Anvaya Beach Resort in Kuta, Bali, Indonesia, as follows:

Day 1: 17 October 2026:

1. Sustainable Financing

Day 2: 18 October 2026:

2. Strategic Communications

3. SIDS Inter-regional Dialogue

Pre-conference Workshop 3 - SIDS Inter-regional Dialogue

Addressing the interconnected nature of SIDS through the source-to-sea approach

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are among the world's most vulnerable countries, owing to their limited land and population size, fragile ecosystems, high levels of endemism, and distinct development pathways. Growing pressure on natural resources is driving biodiversity loss, land degradation and freshwater scarcity, while climate change - including sea-level rise, ocean warming and increasingly frequent extreme events - is placing additional strain on ecosystems, livelihoods and key economic sectors. These environmental pressures are compounded by the economic costs of climate-related disasters, repeated cycles of response and recovery, and the loss of natural assets.

The impacts of the triple planetary crisis are particularly acute in SIDS, where human well-being and economic livelihoods are closely dependent on healthy and productive ecosystems. At the same time, the interconnected nature of these challenges provides SIDS with an opportunity to demonstrate how a source-to-sea approach can deliver integrated solutions across terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine systems. As described in the GEF 9 Programming Directions[1], in the island context, such an integrated source-to-sea approach (sometimes referred to as ridge-to-reef) can help drive lasting

[1] GEF 9 Programming Directions (GEF/R.09/18) https://www.thegef.org/council-meeting-documents/gef-r-09-18

environmental and socio-economic transformation and support the transition towards nature-positive societies.

For the past three decades, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) has been a key partner for SIDS across the three regions - the Caribbean, the Pacific, and the Atlantic, Indian Ocean and South China Sea (AIS)[2]—providing support to address environmental challenges and protect critical habitats and biodiversity. Under IW:LEARN5 (2022–2027), and in collaboration with partners, a pre-conference SIDS workshop was held ahead of the 10th International Waters Conference (IWC10) (Montevideo, Uruguay; September 2024), followed by two intra-regional workshops in the Pacific (Nadi, Fiji; November 2025) and the Caribbean (Panama City; Panama; September 2026). In addition, IW:LEARN support three SIDS twinning exchanges between SIDS IW projects as part of its twinning programme. These activities have been aligned with the priorities of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS), the new programme of action for SIDS.

The SIDS inter-regional dialogue, to be held ahead of the IWC11 (Bali, Indonesia; October 2026) will build on previous SIDS activities and focus on **the application of the source-to-sea approach to achieve environment and development goals in SIDS,** in alignment with the priorities and programming directions outlined under GEF-9:

- Ecosystem valuation and accounting frameworks;
- Source-to-sea spatial prioritization and planning;
- Scaling solutions across the source-to-sea system;
- Capacity Building, Knowledge Management, Awareness and Collaborative Engagement Strengthening local stakeholder and decision-maker capacities

Aim and Objectives

The overall aim is to strengthen inter-regional knowledge exchange and collaboration among SIDS on the application of integrated source-to-sea approaches to address interconnected environmental and development challenges.

More specifically, the objectives are to:

- Strengthen the understanding of the source-to-sea approach in the context of SIDS;
- Discuss how source-to-sea approaches can support SIDS environmental and development priorities, particularly in relation to

[2] African SIDS are generally considered part of the AIS region in the UN SIDS context. The African SIDS are: Cabo Verde – Atlantic; Comoros - Indian Ocean; Guinea-Bissau - Atlantic; Mauritius - Indian Ocean; São Tomé and Príncipe – Atlantic; and Seychelles - Indian Ocean.

ecosystem valuation and accounting, spatial planning, scaling solutions, and capacity development;
- Explore how the approach can be applied to ensure linkages and harmonized interventions across source-to-sea sectors and segments

Expected outputs

- Enhanced inter-regional exchange of experiences, lessons learned and good practices on integrated source-to-sea approaches in SIDS.
- A concise set of key messages and recommendations to inform future SIDS-related programming.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Have increased knowledge of practical approaches for ecosystem valuation, spatial prioritization, scaling solutions and capacity development within a source-to-sea framework applied to the SIDS context.
- Identify opportunities to apply source-to-sea approaches to key SIDS priorities, including biodiversity conservation, land degradation, freshwater security, climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods.
- Identify opportunities to transfer and adapt lessons from other SIDS regions to their own national or project contexts.

Target audience

The primary audience is:

- IW project managers
- Thematic experts
- GEF Agencies
- Intergovernmental organisations
- Non-governmental organisations from African, Caribbean and Pacific SIDS

Co-organizers

IW:LEARN

UNEP

Workshop 3. Provisional Agenda

Sunday 18 October 2026

Venue: Kuta Room, Anvaya Beach Resort, Bali

Time	Section	Topics to be covered	Lead / Contributors
09:00-09:15	**Welcome**		Claudette Spiteri (IW:LEARN) Isabelle Vanderbeck (UNEP) Ines Benabdallah (GEF Secretariat)
09:15-09:40	**Setting the Scene**	The interconnected nature of SIDS ○ Challenges specific to SIDS ○ Integrated solutions through a Source-to-sea approach	Penelope Stock – UNDP (BGI IP GCP; GEF ID: 11250)
09:40-10:30	**Inter-regional dialogue 1: Ecosystem valuation and accounting frameworks**	How can methods for the valuation of nature (ecosystems and ecosystem services) be tailored to a SIDS context and used in decision support systems from source-to-sea How to ensure robust data collection, management, and infrastructure to support ongoing ecosystem accounting and evidence-based policy making	Jailson Lopes - GWP-SA (Afri SIDS; GEF ID: 10865) Pedro Moreno – IDB/UNEP(CreW+; GEF ID: 9601) Susanna Debeauville-Scott - OECS (PROCARIBE+; GEF ID: 10800) Mary Kim – ADB (Blue Pacific Finance Hub; GEF ID: 10986)

			Moderator: Claudette Spiteri (IW:LEARN)
10:30-11:00	**Coffee & tea break**		
11:00-12:00	**Inter-regional dialogue 2: Source-to-sea spatial prioritization and planning**	How to ensure policy coherence through integrated spatial prioritization and planning How to ensure collaboration across relevant Ministries such as Finance/Economic Development/Planning, Environment, Water, Energy, and those representing key economic activities e.g. fisheries and aquaculture, agriculture, and tourism What is required for the development or updating of integrated land use and marine spatial plans at national and local levels, accounting for source-to-sea linkages	Patrick Debels -UNOPS (PROCARIBE+; GEF ID: 10800) Laverne Walker - UNEP Cartagena (IWEco & CreW+; GEF ID: 4932 & 9601) Robert Iromalefo - Water Resources Division (WRD), Solomon Islands (PacVolcanics; GEF ID: 10712) Anawaite Vuetaki Starzynski - Mineral Resources Department (MRD), Republic of Fiji (PacVolcanics; GEF ID: 10712) **Moderator:** Isabelle Vanderbeck (UNEP)
12:00-13:00	**Inter-regional dialogue 3: Scaling solutions across the source-to-sea system**	What is required for scaling solutions that address ecosystem degradation in a source-to-sea system How to ensure linkages and harmonized interventions across source-to-sea sectors and segments	Shamiso Kumbirai - GWP-SA (Afri SIDS; GEF ID: 10865) Tanja Lieuw – Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CarBLUFIN; GEF ID: 10782) Rachel Ramsey – Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CHO IP T&T; GEF ID: 11363)

			Sandra Galvis Rodriguez – SPC (PacVolcanics; GEF ID: 10712) **Moderator:** Claudette Spiteri (IW:LEARN)
13:00-14:00	**Lunch**		
14:00-14:45	**Capacity building, knowledge management, awareness and collaborative engagement strengthening local stakeholder and decision-maker capacities**	What is needed for SIDS to independently apply, manage, and monitor interventions How can local and traditional knowledge related to science, valuation and source-to-sea approaches, knowledge exchange and management be captured and utilized	Julian Barbiere (IOC of UNESCO) (SOPs; GEF ID: 12107) Penelope Stock – UNDP (BGI IP GCP; GEF ID: 11250) Pamela Castillo – WCS (Women Ocean Guardians; GEF ID: 11933) **Moderator:** Ines Benabdallah (GEF Secretariat)
14:45-15:00	Closing		Isabelle Vanderbeck (UNEP)