

# Partnerships and Linkages

## Introduction

Resource management cannot operate in a vacuum and this is particularly true of coral reef management couched in a framework of integrated coastal and watershed management. It is even truer when community-based or co-management approaches are involved. Increased collaboration between coral reef managers and stakeholders can lead to less conflict and the development of policies that assist in the smooth running of the management programs (McClanahan et al. 2005). Overlapping mandates and conflict of interest primarily between coral reef managers and other government departments with interests in the coastal zone (e.g. Fisheries, Agriculture, and Tourism) continue to be a challenge in many countries, as do conflicts between user groups (e.g. fisheries and tourism). These sectors have the greatest influence coral reefs and coral reef management. Increased consultation between coral reef managers and other departments may lead to some improvements, but ultimately a coral reef management program must, from its inception, link all stakeholders and seek to reduce conflicts.

## Key Lessons Learned and Recommendations

- Private sector partnerships can provide financial and technical support once effectively engaged.
- Private sector projects and engagement need to be clearly focused and well defined and have a core understanding of the environment in order to achieve successful outcomes.
- Industry engagement is important but needs to ensure that there is continual compliance with a sustainable code of practice (i.e. not greenwashing).
- If there is an economic focus/incentive such as tourism, it can be easier to achieve consensus and action.
- Private programs such as eco-venture volunteer tourism may serve to create stability and flexibility in areas where resources are limited, such as remote areas.
- Buy-in from stakeholders can be difficult if they cannot see direct benefits from the project.
- Government support (including traditional and indigenous governance) is vital to the development, implementation and sustainability of any project.
- Collaboration and oversight with government bodies can bring technical, financial, and administrative capacities that include local knowledge.
- A strong legislative foundation is required for the success and sustainability of project activities, especially where enforcement is necessary. However, in some cases, an agreed code of practice among user groups may be more beneficial.
- Cross-sectoral linkages builds monitoring, enforcement, and implementation capacity, allowing for better allocation of resources and avoiding duplication.

## **Conclusions**

- Cross-sectoral linkages and multi-stakeholder collaboration and integration builds capacity, sustainability, and a more effective implementation approach, creating a more comprehensive project.
- Costs and benefits of private sector involvement need to be evaluated and should be involved early in the development to assure buy-in and long-term engagement.
- Economic and other incentives need to be clearly identified and communicated in order to maintain stakeholder interests and manage expectations.