



Media Advisory

For immediate release:

Mangroves for the Future, MFF chooses Indonesia to host its first Regional Training Course on Tools for Integrated Coastal Management, 27-31 October, 2008, Semarang, Indonesia

Background:

Coastal ecosystems have been centres of human settlement for thousands of years because of their remarkable biological productivity. Coastal ecosystems provide us with essential goods and services which underpin substantial commerce benefiting local, national, regional, and global economies. They encompass our ports, trade and transport routes, all supporting economic activities- and have later become a magnet for tourism. Healthy coastal areas can also help protect us against extreme weather conditions and natural disasters which are becoming increasingly more frequent. **Mangroves for the Future, MFF** is a Regional Initiative which is building knowledge, strengthening empowerment, and enhancing governance. Indonesia is a focal country and has set up its own National Coordinating Body (NCB) to direct and steer activities being implemented in Indonesia. Climate change is a cross-cutting issue integrated into all MFF activities.

Key Issues:

Many coastal ecosystems are under severe threat because of increasing populations, coastal development, and demand for coastal resources, such as fish and shellfish. Already, poor coastal communities are facing severe hardships because coastal resources no longer sustain their traditional livelihoods. Climate change exacerbates the existing threats.

Climate change impacts and human induced changes have already been witnessed in the **Demak district of Central Java** where thousands of hectares of mangrove forests have been converted to *tambaks* for shrimp and other aquaculture during the last decades. The sea has now invaded and flooded the *tambaks* as well as the low-lying residential areas between **Pantai Moro Sari** and **Pantai Moro Demak**. More than 200 households have already been relocated.

"Most of our families have left but we cannot move from here...fishing is what we know and we do not have any other skills, so we would still have to come back here for our livelihood" said a household member from one of the few households remaining in the most heavily flooded area near Moro Sari.

"The loss of mangrove forests, land subsidence, and sea-level rise are all likely to have contributed to the increase in flooding", say Dr. **Donald Macintosh**, MFF Coordinator

The Indonesian NCB has selected Demak District as one of the key MFF project implementation sites. The Regional Training Course held at Novotel, Semarang this week, is a first step towards building capacity through technical assistance in the fields of livelihoods, community participation, climate change and disaster risk reduction. The course has brought 36 participants from eight countries in the region and Indonesian and International experts as trainers and facilitators. This intense week of training will focus on applying sustainable management tools to address environmental problems in Demak District and other vulnerable coastal areas.

"The coastal communities in these areas depend on coastal resources for their survival. The stakes are high, the issues complex and challenging, but we must restore and continue to protect our coastal ecosystems. A failure to do so would be disastrous" say, Prof. **Johannes Hutabarat**, Dean of Faculty of Fisheries & Marine Science, UNDIP.

When and Where:

Members of the Press are invited to the **Opening Ceremony, Monday 27 October, 2008 at 09.00-10.00 am** 1st Floor, Novotel, Hotel, Semarang, and to a **project field visit Wednesday 29 October**, at 7.45 am departing from Novotel Hotel.

Materials for the Media:

www.mangrovesforthefuture.org

www.undip.ac.id

Spokespersons:

Prof. Dr. Johannes Hutabarat, Dean of Faculty of Fisheries & Marine Science, UNDIP.

Prof. Dr. Donald Macintosh, MFF Coordinator

Mr. Galih Rasiono, Head of Marine Affairs and Fisheries representing the Governor of Central Java Province

Dr. Nur Hygiawati Rasiono, BAPPENAS and MFF Indonesia NCB Representative

Dr. Sergio Feld, UNDP, Regional Centre in Bangkok

Dr. Muhamad Nur, Vice Rector for Development & Cooperation, UNDIP.

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About Mangroves for the Future, MFF

Known as MFF, Mangroves for the future is based on a vision of a healthier, more prosperous and secure future for all Indian Ocean communities. It is a unique initiative led by IUCN and UNDP together with other partners. MFF works in four key areas of influence: regional cooperation, national programme support, private sector engagement and community action.

The initiative, launched by former US president Bill Clinton in Phuket, Thailand, December 2006 builds on a history of coastal management interventions before and after the 2004 tsunami. MFF is inclusive of all coastal ecosystems and focuses on countries worst-affected by the tsunami; India, Indonesia, Maldives, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. MFF has grown to include other countries in the region that face similar issues, with an overall aim to promote an integrated ocean wide approach to coastal zone management.