

Marine Conservation Society Seychelles

**Workshop on
ENVIRONMENTAL MOORING BUOYS**

2nd June 2003

**National Institute of Education
Mont Fleuri**

Workshop Proceedings

Executive Summary:

Environmental moorings were first brought into Seychelles in 2001 with a programme initiated by the MCSS and funded by the Dutch Trust Fund. This was extended by additional funding under the Global Environmental Facility funding of the Seychelles Marine Ecosystem Management Project.

To date all installation costs have been covered by grant funding as has a large proportion of the inspection and remedial maintenance carried out by the MCSS. In order to sustain an on-going programme input from stakeholders is necessary to identify weaknesses in the current system and to identify new areas for mooring placement and potential new partners for mooring management.

A short presentation was made on what these moorings are, how they work, and how they protect the sea floor and surrounding marine structures.

The origin of the MCSS Moorings Programme was presented and reasons to install environmental moorings was discussed. The different types of mooring installation were described and a breakdown of their costs presented.

Some concern was expressed over the cost of installations following the end of the GEF funding. Currently the GEF subsidises 100% of the cost of installation and over 50% inspection and remedial maintenance costs to the benefit of Mooring Managers. It was suggested that alternative sources of funding be investigated by mooring managers.

The strategy behind choosing which areas should have moorings was presented and the issue of liability was discussed in detail. The workshop was advised that the Centre for Marine Conservation (CMC) had commissioned a study looking at liability as governed by the US legal system on the one hand and the British legal system on the other. The study concluded that the mooring managers had a three part duty: to provide properly installed moorings; to ensure that they were regularly maintained; and to advise the public of the correct method of use.

The correct procedures for using moorings were presented; common problems encountered and ways to alleviate them were discussed. A draft document 'Use of Environmental Moorings' was presented for comments.

Plans for additional mooring installations were presented and interested parties were able to suggest further areas where moorings are needed. Discussions were held on potential new areas for mooring deployment and prospective management partners.

Concerns were raised about financing moorings and the subject of fees for mooring use was raised: it was felt that tourists visiting Seychelles are already expected to pay multiple fees for travelling between islands. The consensus seemed to be that a National mooring use fee would be more acceptable and that mooring management should be controlled by a single National oversight body.

This suggestion raised many new topics of discussion and it was agreed that a discussion document on the mooring programme and a potential National application be drafted for distribution to stakeholders and authorities for consultation and comment. These findings could then be taken into consideration by the Ministry of Tourism and Transport in their Yachting Paper.

Introduction:

Environmental moorings were first brought into Seychelles in 2001 with a programme initiated by the MCSS and funded by the Dutch Trust Fund. This was extended by additional funding under the Seychelles Marine Ecosystem Management Project supported by the Global Environmental Facility.

To date all installation costs have been subsidised by grant funding as has a large proportion of the inspection and remedial maintenance carried out by the MCSS. In order to sustain an on-going programme input from stakeholders is necessary to identify weaknesses in the current system and to identify new areas for mooring placement and potential new partners for mooring management.

Workshop Aims:

1. To advise the public & stakeholders about the mooring project and reasons to install moorings
2. To advise the public and stakeholders of the types of mooring and their costs
3. To discuss the strategy behind mooring areas and their management
4. To discuss mooring use and problems encountered
5. To advise the public and stakeholders of the inspection and maintenance regime
6. To ascertain additional areas where moorings are needed and identify potential management partners
7. To draw up an outline for a Mooring Managers Workshop on mooring implementation and maintenance

Workshop outline:

1. What are Environmental Moorings and Why Use them?
2. MCSS Mooring Programme
3. Mooring Management and Strategy
4. Use of Moorings and Common Problems
5. Inspection and Maintenance
6. Further Mooring Installations and New Mooring Areas
7. The Next Step: Workshop for Mooring Managers

Workshop Outputs:

1. List of organizations prepared/interested in having moorings installed.
2. Other priority sites for mooring installation established
3. List of potential mooring manager partners
4. Basic framework for Mooring Managers Workshop

Workshop Discussion Points:

1. What are Environmental Moorings and Why Use them?

A short presentation was made on what these moorings are, how they work, and how they protect the sea floor and surrounding marine structures.

2. MCSS Mooring Programme

The origin of the MCSS Moorings Programme was presented and reasons to install environmental moorings discussed. The different types of mooring installation were described and a breakdown of their costs presented.

Some concern was expressed over the cost of installations following the end of the GEF funding. Currently grant funding had subsidised the cost of installation and over 50% of the cost of inspection and remedial maintenance to the benefit of Mooring Managers. It was suggested that alternative sources of funding be investigated by mooring managers.

3. Mooring Management and Strategy

The strategy behind choosing which areas should have moorings was presented; Also the issues of liability were presented with relevance to long term maintenance and mooring management.

The issue of liability was discussed in detail. The workshop was advised that the Centre for Marine Conservation (CMC) had commissioned a study (Anita van Breda and Kristina Gjerde) looking at liability as governed by the US legal system on the one hand and the British legal system on the other. While it is up to the vessel's captain to ensure the safety of his boat and passengers, the study concluded that the mooring managers also had a three part duty: to provide properly installed moorings; to ensure that they were regularly maintained; and to advise the public of the correct method of use. Mooring Managers were concerned that stressing that ultimate liability rested with the captain would discourage people from using moorings, with undesirable consequences especially in ecologically sensitive areas.

It was suggested that MCSS be responsible for liability since they were inspecting the buoys. MCSS responded by pointing out that their approval simply shows that at the time of inspection the mooring was sound and it was up to the Mooring Managers to show, through the maintenance worksheet records that all had been done to keep the mooring within standard. Basically a good maintenance track record was the main line of defence for Mooring Managers should a mooring accidentally fail between scheduled routine maintenance activities.

4. Use of Moorings and Common Problems

The correct procedures for using moorings were presented; common problems encountered and ways to alleviate them were discussed. A draft document 'Use of Environmental Moorings' was presented for comments.

It was agreed that to date, most damage to moorings had been due to improper use, primarily by yachts. During the initial stages of the programme, Yacht Charter Companies were given copies of the standard Mooring Use Protocol. Since then a draft pictorial version to bridge the language barrier has been developed (A text only version is attached as Appendix I). Workshop attendees were able to comment on the document. The following suggestions were made:

- a. the liability section needs to be expanded to avoid misunderstanding
- b. more pictures or sketches need to be inserted in the document

- c. the boxes should be numbered to facilitate navigation through the document
- d. rather than stating that problems be reported to the local authorities, it was suggested that the MCSS hotline be used or alternatively that the problem be reported to the yacht charter company itself

The printing and production of the final document is being sponsored by a local yacht charter company. The guides will be distributed to all yacht charterers operating within Seychelles waters.

5. Inspection and Maintenance

The inspection and maintenance regime for these moorings was discussed and an indication of likely re-current costs presented.

6. Further Mooring Installations and New Mooring Areas

Plans for additional mooring installations were presented and interested parties were able to suggest additional areas where moorings are needed. Discussions were held on potential new areas for mooring deployment and prospective management partners.

The following issues were brought up during the discussion section:

- a. Charging a mooring Fee

The main concern regarding mooring fees was that tourists visiting Seychelles are already expected to pay multiple fees for travelling between islands.

Various other options were discussed. These included:

- Differential pricing for different use, i.e. charging for a predetermined time period
- Overnight mooring fees as was previously being charged by the Marine Parks Authority
- A draft policy for charging a Yachting fee is currently being developed by the Seychelles government. A mooring fee could be incorporated under this policy.
- Local management and fees vs. National management and fees. The consensus seemed to be that a National fee would be more suitable with a single National oversight body. This option raised a number of issues:
 1. The need for more mooring buoys throughout the Seychelles EEZ. It was proposed that MCSS follow up with charter companies for other mooring locations.
 2. The aesthetics of having so many moorings would need to be seen in light of aesthetics as addressed under the draft Eco-tourism Policy.

3. The fee where possible should be paid annually and all mooring areas would be covered.
4. Mooring Managers could receive a share of that fee to cover maintenance costs or alternatively all maintenance could be covered by one organisation
5. A review mechanism would need to be set up to look at the frequency of mooring use to assist in appropriate scheduling of maintenance.

b. Identification of user groups.

A number of user groups were identified (see below). One of the concerns put forward was whether there should be a distinction between them. Given that residents are not required to pay landing fees or entries fees. Currently, only yacht charters are being targeted but it was pointed out that shipping agents should also be made aware of the mooring regulations so that they can pass them onto visiting yachts that they represent.

Mooring Buoys User Groups:

- Dive boats
- Yachts
- Leisure boats
- Taxi boats
- Visiting yachts / Shipping agents
- Local yacht owners

c. Discussion document

It was agreed that a discussion document on the mooring programme and a potential National application be drafted for distribution to stakeholders and authorities for their consultation and comment so that these findings could be taken into consideration in the Ministry of Tourism and Transport's Yachting Paper.

d. Demarcation buoys

The issue of demarcation was brought up for future discussion; MCSS advised that the setting of demarcation buoys was certainly feasible and would be roughly the same cost as a 21" mooring buoy system.

e. Other mooring locations

It was proposed that MCSS follow up with charter companies for other mooring locations.

The Ministry of Tourism and Transport submitted a document which is a first attempt at determining how many yachts can be moored in the various bays bearing in mind the need

to avoid crowding. It was stressed that this was not necessarily a goal to aim for but rather an attempt at determining maximum capacity that should not be exceeded. This is attached as Appendix II.

7. The Next Step: Workshop for Mooring Managers

Interested parties were asked whether they felt it was necessary to conduct a workshop for Mooring Managers to review mooring implementation and maintenance. It was unanimously agreed that stakeholders would prefer to look at a National programme first.

Workshop Outputs:

1. List of organizations prepared/interested in having moorings installed.

No new organizations were identified during the workshop, but there is scope for future interest through the development of a National mooring programme.

2. Other priority sites for mooring installation established.

A number of sites were identified by participants. These include potential mooring areas which are not covered under the GEF programme and are covered in the list submitted by the Ministry of Tourism and Transport (Appendix II).

The proper authorities or organizations will need to be approached to discuss whether or not it would be feasible to install mooring at these sites and suitable mooring managers would need to be identified.

3. List of potential mooring manager partners

No new mooring manager partners were identified at the workshop. However, given that a National mooring programme is to be considered, new partners will likely be identified through the process of implementing such a system.

4. Basic framework for Mooring Managers Workshop

It was decided that prior to conducting a Mooring Managers workshop, the proposed National mooring programme should be developed.

APPENDIX I

- Special moorings have been deployed around Seychelles to safeguard the coral reef system from anchor damage.
- Des bouées d'amarrage ont été installées aux Seychelles pour protéger les récifs coralliens des dommages dus aux ancres.

	White buoys: boats to 20 metres Bouées blanches : bateaux de moins de 20 mètres		Yellow buoys: boats 20 to 35 metres Bouées jaunes : bateaux de 20 à 30 mètres
	Approach the mooring from downwind / down current Approchez la bouée face au vent/ face au courant Tie off a suitable line for mooring Préparez un cordage adéquat pour l'amarrage		Check that the mooring is in good condition Vérifiez l'état de la bouée Pick up the mooring's floating 'pick-up line' with a boat hook Crochetez le cordage flottant de la bouée
	Pass your line through the eye of the pick-up line Passez votre corde dans la boucle du cordage flottant		Let out a suitable distance on your rope, at least 5 metres Laissez une distance de corde d'au moins 5 mètres
	Secure the end of your line Amarrez vous		Check that you vessel swings securely and safely Vérifiez le bon mouvement de votre bateau à l'amarrage

**ALWAYS USE A ROPE TO ATTACH TO THE MOORING
DO NOT SECURE THE PICK-UP LINE DIRECTLY TO YOUR BOAT
DOING SO CAN CAUSE DAMAGE TO YOUR BOAT AND THE MOORING
UTILISEZ TOUJOURS UNE CORDE POUR VOUS AMARRER.
NE VOUS AMARREZ JAMAIS DIRECTEMENT A LA BOUEE
CE QUI RISQUERAIT D'ENDOMMAGER VOTRE BATEAU ET LA BOUEE
D'AMARRAGE**

- If you find that a mooring has been damaged please do not use it, move on to another suitable mooring site and advise the local authorities of the problem so the unit can be repaired.
- Ne vous amarrez pas à une bouée endommagée ; cherchez une autre bouée d'amarrage et prévenez les autorités locales pour permettre la réparation de la bouée.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please note that liability for using these moorings remains with the user / Captain of the vessel; if a mooring does not appear to be useable then you should move to another or to an area where you are allowed to anchor. • Veuillez noter que la responsabilité de l'utilisation des bouées d'amarrage est entièrement à la charge de l'utilisateur/skipper du bateau. Si une bouée d'amarrage ne paraît pas utilisable, cherchez une bouée voisine ou jetez l'ancre dans un site autorisé. |
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APPENDIX II

Potential Yacht Capacity at Seasonal Mooring Areas

SOUTH EAST MONSOON		NORTH WEST MONSOON	
Mahe		Mahe	
Victoria	20	Victoria	20
Roche Caiman	10	Roche Caiman	10
Cerf Island	5	Cerf Island Channel	10
Ste Anne	5	Ste Anne	10
Round Island	5	Anse Royale	5
Beau Vallon	30	Intendance	5
Anse Major	3	Baie Lazare	5
Baie Ternay	5		
Port Launay	5		
Anse la Mouche	10		
Praslin		Praslin	
Baie Ste Anne	20	Baie Ste Anne	30
Anse Volbert	15	Curieuse	10
Curieuse	5	Grand Anse	20
Anse Petite Cour	8		
Anse Lazio	10		
Anse Georgette	3		
Grand Anse	20		
La Digue		La Digue	
La Passe,	10	La Passe	5
		Petite Anse	5
		Anse Cocos	3
		Grand Anse	5
Silhouette			
Anse Mondon	5		
Other Islands		Other Islands	
Grand Soeur	3	Fregate	3
Marianne	3	Bird	3
Fregate	3	Denis	3
Bird	5	Desroches	10
Denis	5	North Island	3
Desroches	10		
Poivre	5		
North Island	3		
TOTAL	231	TOTAL	165

NOTE: Most of the mooring areas will accommodate this number of yachts only if moorings are installed.

Assume 200 yachts operating in Seychelles; at 40% occupancy = 80 yachts on charter at any one time