RÉPUBLIQUE
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FONDS
FRANÇAIS POUR
L'ENVIRONNEMENT
MONDIAL

Aquatic ecosystems resilience

Preservation

Governance

Resilience

Our action **today**

29 projects underway in 2022 — amounting to → **€38 M** earmarked for aquatic ecosystems

High seas, coastlines, wetlands, and freshwater hydrosystems: their role is crucial for climate regulation. By causing ocean acidification or sea level rise, anthropogenic pressures threaten these natural environments. To ensure socio-environmental resilience of ecosystems and local populations, FFEM supports projects that rely on nature-based solutions.

1 Ocean governance

In order to structure improved ocean governance, FFEM promotes the **strengthening of scientific knowledge and its use to guide decision-making** in favor of preserving oceanic ecosystems, including the high seas and deep-sea environments. It supports the establishment of effective tools for the protection of iconic ecosystems and marine biodiversity, such as **marine protected areas** (MPAs). It contributes to capacity building for the governance and preservation of these ecosystems through the development of specific tools and support for regional stakeholders. Lastly, to ensure sustainable reduction of marine pollution, FFEM encourages the **changing behaviours and practices within households and industries.**

HIGH SEAS

€3 M

The Costa Rica Thermal Dome and the Sargasso Sea are a hotspot of biodiversity. But their governance is a challenge because of the **legal status of the high seas** and because they overlap with areas under national juridictions. FFEM is helping to develop **co-management of these environments**.

2 Socio-environmental resilience of coastal areas

To strengthen the **resilience of territories at the land-sea interface and their populations**, FFEM funds projects aimed at preserving, restoring, and rehabilitating coastal ecosystems (mangroves, seagrass beds, reefs, and coastal forests). It notably supports **nature-based solutions (NBS) and the integration of innovative green and blue solutions** with the goal of adapting coastal areas to climate change and natural risks. FFEM promotes the sustainable valorisation of coastal ecosystems through its support for the **social and solidarity economy (SSE) and pilot projects on blue carbon from mangroves and seagrass beds**.

WEST AFRICA

€2.6 M

To enhance the resilience of societies and ecosystems in the face of environmentally harmful infrastructure development, FFEM is funding a project implemented by the **Regional Partnership for Coastal and Marine Conservation.**

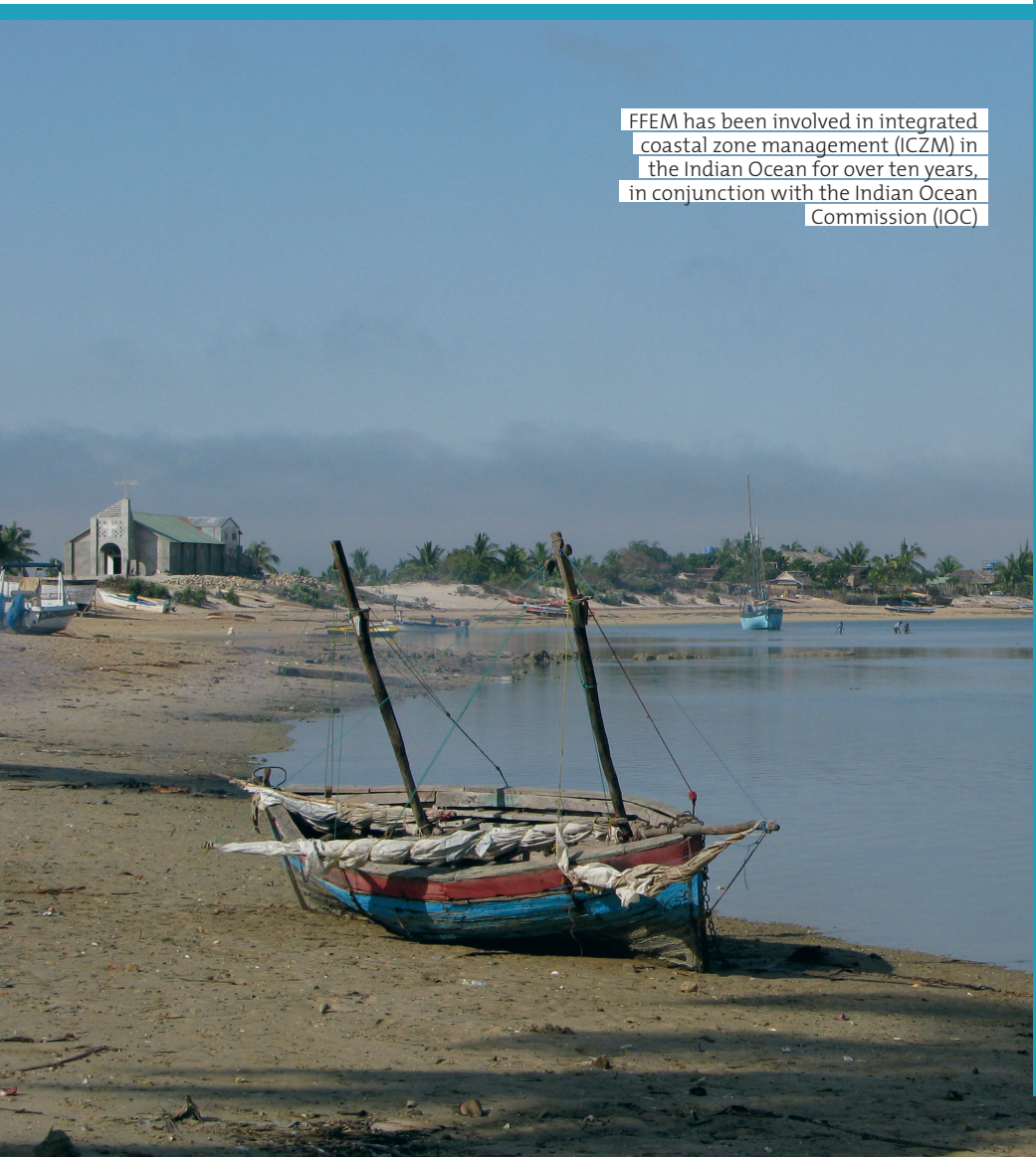
3 Freshwater ecosystem preservation

THE MEDITERRANEAN

€663,000

To **protect the wetlands** of the Mediterranean Basin, FFEM provides support to the civil society organisation Tour du Valat. By **connecting actors,** FFEM seeks to give them more influence in the region.

FFEM prioritises **nature-based solutions** to restore and preserve wetland functions, as well as to combat the effects of climate change. It pays special attention to **freshwater and saltwater interfaces** to best support flood risk management, groundwater recharge, and the preservation of biodiversity reservoirs. FFEM also promotes a collaborative and integrated management of transboundary watersheds, which is particularly crucial for water resources, and capacity building for managers and decision-makers.



FFEM has been involved in integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) in the Indian Ocean for over ten years, in conjunction with the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)

A cross-cutting approach

To preserve aquatic ecosystems over the long term, restoration and conservation actions must be combined with improved practices, whether in reducing greenhouse gas emissions or in promoting sustainable fishing practices. With this in mind, FFEM supports cross-cutting projects that target aquatic systems as well as climate issues and pollution. In this way, we contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

3 ILLUSTRATIVE CROSS-CUTTING PROJECTS

OCEAN · BIODIVERSITY · POLLUTION

MEDITERRANEAN

The SMILO project encourages experience sharing among regional conservation stakeholders. Thanks to the "Small Sustainable Islands" label, it promotes integrated and innovative initiatives against pollution and the erosion of biodiversity.

OCEAN · BIODIVERSITY · CLIMATE

MULTI-COUNTRY

The restoration and preservation actions carried out by FFEM's Mangroves Initiative contribute to climate change adaptation and the protection of marine and land biodiversity.

OCEAN · BIODIVERSITY · CLIMATE

PACIFIC

The Tara Oceans expedition is the first global study of plankton. Improving our state of knowledge about these organisms helps fight climate change and preserve biodiversity.

Nearly 30 years of **solutions**

89 **aquatic ecosystem projects financed since 1995**

€116 M **committed to aquatic ecosystems since 1995**

One of the first projects supported by FFEM at its inception sought to improve water resource management in the Jordan River Basin. That was back in 1994. Since then, FFEM has worked ceaselessly to increase and structure its action to improve the resilience of aquatic ecosystems, from continental waters to the high seas.

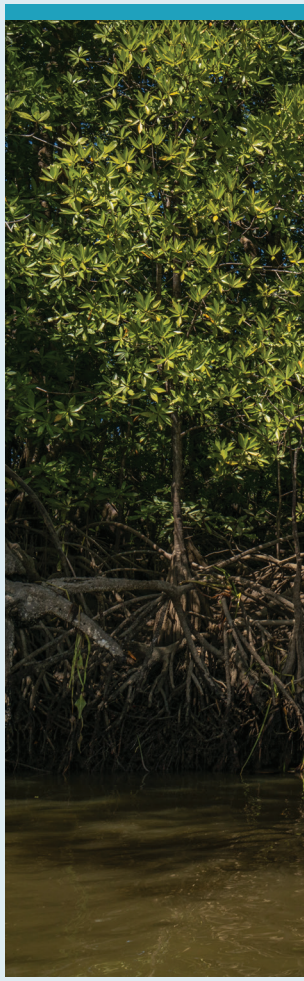
Toward integrated management of all aquatic ecosystems

SOUTH PACIFIC - 2013

€2 M

To improve the resilience of the Pacific islands, FFEM has supported the RESCCUE regional cooperation project. RESCCUE **supports local communities**. Among other actions, it sets up **payments for ecosystem services**.

Since its creation, FFEM has made better management of international waters a primary objective of its action. Initially, it targeted **freshwater and transboundary basins,** encouraging the creation of regional cooperation to ensure that they are well managed. It then included **aquifers, wetlands, and coastal zones** into its actions. To do so, it supports **integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) approaches**, which promote effective coordination and networking among stakeholders as well as the development of concerted management plans to implement more effective protection measures.



Promoting "action research" approaches

AFRICA - 2015

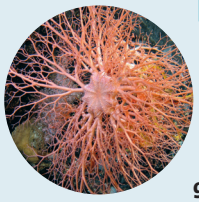
€1 M

To **secure drinking-water resources**, FFEM has supported the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) in producing **scientific knowledge on cyanobacteria** in lakes in three African countries.

Aquatic ecosystems, and especially the high seas, are still poorly understood by decision-makers and even scientists. For this reason, FFEM finances **research projects**. By improving our state of knowledge about these environments, FFEM seeks to contribute to finding **innovative solutions** to protect them. It promotes pilot projects that test these methodological or technical solutions in a given territory. Through the sharing and capitalisation of knowledge, FFEM works to replicate successful experiences in other territories or at other scales.

Conserving biodiversity outside areas of national jurisdiction

The high seas lie outside national jurisdictions and **do not yet have a clear legal status** or binding legal instruments to ensure their protection. They are particularly vulnerable to destructive practices such as overfishing, mineral exploration, and pollution. Since 2010, in addition to strengthening governance of the high seas by promoting an integrated approach, FFEM has been supporting the establishment of **sanctuaries and protected areas** to preserve the biodiversity of these environments.



INDIAN OCEAN - 2014

€1.3 M

Seamounts are home to ecosystems under severe threat from mining and fishing. To protect them, FFEM supports IUCN in order to **bolster scientific knowledge about them and improve their governance**.

Nature-based solutions (NBS)

NBS are an essential aspect of the climate change adaptation supported by FFEM. They rely on natural ecosystems (mangroves, sea grass beds, wetlands, etc.) and ecological engineering to build resilience to extreme events and protect the people who depend on them. NBS are used everywhere and include three types of actions:

- **Conserving** functional ecosystems
- **Improving management** of ecosystems and resources
- **Restoring** degraded ecosystems.

CREATING A PROTECTED MARINE AREA LEADS TO, ON AVERAGE AND AFTER 5 YEARS:

+40% **FISH SIZE**

+166% **BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

+500% **BIOMASS**

An illustrative NBS

Mangrove restoration

COSTA RICA – BENIN

In Costa Rica, 35% of mangroves were destroyed between 1980 and 2005. In Benin, 25% were destroyed between 1980 and 2006. Because mangroves are **crucial environments for food security and the fight against climate change,** FFEM supports a project in both countries to restore them and improve their management.

The French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) supports pilot and innovative projects in favour of the environment in developing countries. These projects contribute to the preservation of biodiversity, climate, international waters, land and ozone layer and combat pollution in response to international environmental conventions. They are in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and generate local environmental, social and economic benefits.

The particularity of the FFEM: It relies on pilot projects to support innovation and disseminate lessons learned on a larger scale.

It supports projects carried out by public, private or civil society actors from both the South and the North, in co-financing with other financiers and international organizations.

Created in 1994 by the French government following the first Earth Summit, the FFEM has since its creation supported more than 400 projects worth €500 million in over 120 countries, 70% of which are located in Africa and the Mediterranean.

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