The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Myanmar Biodiversity Fund (MBF) and Fauna & Flora International (FFI) are collaborating to support the spatial management of marine ecosystems within Myanmar’s Western and Tanintharyi seascapes in the Andaman Sea. These areas are home to vital biodiversity, including coral reef, seagrass and mangrove habitats, along with marine species that sustain the livelihoods of coastal communities. However, illegal and uncontrolled fishing and unsustainable fishing practices increasingly threaten these habitats and the communities that rely on them. Such threats have resulted from poor legislation, lack of enforcement, and limited stakeholder consultation.

WCS, MBF and FFI are taking a bottom-up approach, working with local partners, to design and improve an integrated network of locally managed, community-led marine protected areas (CL-MPAs). The aim is to conserve biodiversity and support the livelihoods of small-scale fishing communities along Myanmar’s coastline. The project focuses on empowering local communities to engage in sustainable management of marine resources through strengthening civil society, recognition of user rights, and sustainable livelihoods initiatives. The project places particular emphasis on securing the active participation and improved social and economic empowerment of women, ethnic minorities and other marginal groups.

**Project duration**
September 2020 – August 2025

**Country/ies**
Myanmar

**Lead organisation**
Wildlife Conservation Society

**Partners**
Myanmar Biodiversity Fund, Fauna & Flora International

**Total project costs**
€ 3,648,539

**Blue Action Fund grant**
€ 3,000,000 (82%)

**Match funding**
€ 648,539 (18%)

Emphasising community-based conservation, this project aligns with communities in their steadfast commitment to the preservation of Myanmar’s marine ecosystems. Together, a sustainable path is being forged, where local leadership is empowered and collaboration is fostered. By designing a network of CL-MPAs guided by community engagement, the aim is to safeguard biodiversity and enhance the livelihoods of coastal communities.
### KEY TARGETS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newly created MPAs:</td>
<td>4,300 km²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectively managed MPAs:</td>
<td>665 km²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of beneficiaries:</td>
<td>32,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ACTIVITIES AND AREAS OF WORK

#### MPA GOVERNANCE
- Creating new protected areas
- Creating MPA management plans
- Monitoring, control and enforcement
- Data collection and mapping
- Bottom-up management approaches
- Long-term funding for MPA
- Gender empowerment for MPA governance

#### SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS
- Community mapping
- Creating sustainable employment opportunities
- Initiatives to create value added in supply chains
- Economic empowerment of women

#### SPECIES CONSERVATION/SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES
- Data collection on fisheries
- Co-management of fisheries
- Conservation measures for other species

#### HABITAT CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION
- Protection of coral reefs
- Protection of seagrass beds