The Eastern Tropical Pacific seascape is a global hotspot of biodiversity, home to extensive populations of endemic and endangered species, and a highly productive area of the global ocean. Cocos Island National Park and the Seamounts Marine Management Area of Costa Rica stand out as key components of the sustainability of ecological and socio-economic dynamics of this vast seascape.

This project contributes to both the conservation of a network of marine protected areas (MPAs) across the seascape and bringing Costa Rica closer to its goal of protecting 30% of its waters by 2030. Building on the political will and endorsement of the Costa Rican authorities, the project will bring together local and national stakeholders in a participatory and multisectoral process to promote a significant expansion of the Cocos Island MPA. It will build local capacity to drive marine conservation and sustainable socio-economic development by fostering both an integral perspective and a strategic approach to the planning and implementation of ecosystem-based management. The project will help strengthen monitoring capacities to assess and improve MPA management effectiveness and will support long-term financial sustainability. The initiative will also focus on improving the quality of life of impoverished coastal communities through promotion of sustainable tourism and fishing value chains, so reducing pressure on the MPAs.

The grant is expected to (i) increase political will and engagement of the civil society, (ii) offer a fertile foundation to advance new, high-impact actions towards sustainable stewardship of this globally significant area and improve the quality of life of coastal communities.
**KEY TARGETS**

- Newly created MPAs: 40,000 km²
- Effectively managed MPAs: 11,588 km²
- Number of beneficiaries: 5,180

**ACTIVITIES AND AREAS OF WORK**

**MPA GOVERNANCE**
- Creating MPA management plans
- Management plans adaptive to climate change
- Monitoring, control and enforcement
- Use of information and communication technology solutions
- Gender empowerment for MPA governance

**SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS**
- Community mapping
- Creating alternative employment opportunities
- Economic empowerment of women
- Initiatives to increase value added in supply chains
- Community entrepreneurship

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