



# OCEANS AND COASTS

GCCA+ The Alliance for a changing world

#GCCAPlus #EUClimateAction #EUGreenDeal

2020



## KEY ISSUES

**Oceans** are the life source of our planet and vital for healthy human societies and a thriving world economy. They cover **70% of the Earth's surface**, are the planet's largest biosphere, and **home to 50-80% of all life on Earth**. Global warming is having **significant negative effects** on ocean ecosystems.

Warmer oceanic waters are resulting in ocean acidification, deoxygenation, marine heat waves, changes in ocean productivity and ocean circulation, as well as changes in biodiversity. **Climate change effects** such as sea level rise, enhanced sea surges and tropical storms, also put coastal areas at risk.

**Coastal zones** are among the most productive areas in the world, **37% of the world's population** lives within 100 km of the coast. Coastal ecosystems (mangroves, salt marshes, sea grasses) sequester and store large quantities of blue carbon in both the plants and the sediment below and can store 2-3 times more carbon than rainforest. **83% of the global carbon cycle** is circulated through the ocean.

## GCCA+ ACTIONS

23 projects worldwide funded through the **Global Climate Change Alliance Plus** (GCCA+) focus on coastal areas. They address the negative effects of climate change on the coastal ecosystems, the coastal populations and their economic activities.

Major support is provided for the development of **Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)** policies and strategies based on research and vulnerability assessments.

Much attention goes to **coastal protection measures**, both nature-based (rehabilitation of mangrove forests) and through infrastructure works. Another support area is the promotion of **sustainable fisheries and alternative livelihoods**, with (eco)tourism being a popular option.

**Awareness raising** encourages partner countries to embrace adequate adaptation strategies and solutions. Many GCCA+ projects also include **institutional strengthening** initiatives or support to research.



## A heart for mangroves in Suriname

Adjai and his friends are trained in mangrove tree planting by the Global Climate Change Alliance Plus (GCCA+) rehabilitation project in Suriname. Mangrove forests are important for maintaining biodiversity, storing carbon, and protecting the coast against erosion and saltwater intrusion caused by sea level rise and storm surges. The project worked to set up a mangrove biodiversity monitoring system covering the entire coast from Nickerie to Galibi. In the Bigi Pan National Park, Nickerie, known for its rich mangroves and home to the scarlet ibis, several small initiatives to promote local tourism have also been undertaken.

See the full story on [gcca.eu/stories](http://gcca.eu/stories)

An expedition to plant new mangroves with the GCCA+ project in Suriname, © EU GCCA+ 2020

# THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

## EU commitment to oceans and coastal zones

**Small Islands Developing States (SIDS)** form a priority group for receiving EU development assistance, for example through GCCA+ support. Their particular climatic conditions in combination with their socio-economic situation make them amongst the most vulnerable countries to the adverse effects of climate change.

The Recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), adopted by the EU in 2002 introduced principles that are also applied to external actions, including GCCA+ projects. ICZM aims for a **coordinated approach to coastal issues involving all relevant sectors** such as nature protection, aquaculture, fisheries, agriculture, industry, off shore wind energy, shipping, tourism, development of infrastructure, mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

Regarding the **European Green Deal** external dimension, coastal zone management is directly linked to "Biodiversity" and "Climate Action", priority areas.

## International Developments

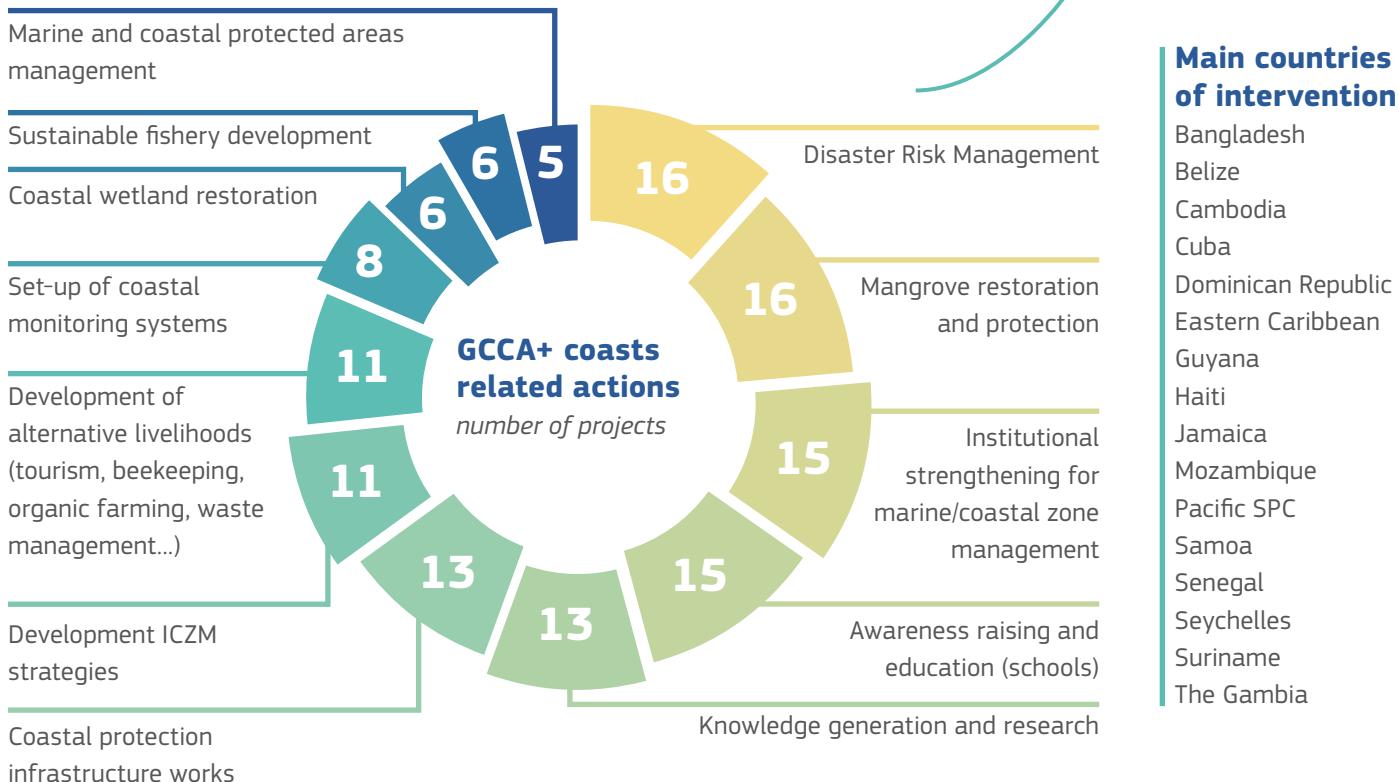
The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO and its partners are planning to launch for 2021-2030 an **International Decade of Ocean Science** for Sustainable Development. The first global "Ocean Conference" was held in 2017 in New York.

Aggressive adaptation efforts will help **"buy time" for many coastal communities**. For example, changing fishery management practices can help maintain fish and shellfish populations. **Protecting mangrove and tidal marshes** can help protect coasts from increased storm surge and flooding. Investments in early warning systems can assist coastal communities that are facing natural disasters. However, there are very clear adaptation limits, and many impacts will still occur even if we reduce emissions.



## GCCA/GCCA+ AND COASTAL ZONES

**23** projects      **33** countries      **138** million euros



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