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## **Ecosystem-based adaptation in small island developing states: two examples from Choiseul Province in the Solomon Islands**

**Key Words:** EbA, Ecosystem Services, SIDS

### **Abstract:**

Many Pacific Island Countries, including the Solomon Islands, are highly exposed to impacts arising from Global Climate Change. Coastal communities, in particular, are extremely exposed to these impacts, with increased severity of extreme weather events directly affecting the lives of hundreds of thousands of people and damaging the ecosystems and resources they rely on for everyday survival. Dealing with this problem has historically been exacerbated by the lack of strong coordination from government and a rather disparate effort from various Non-Government Organisations. Each developing their own separate local or sectoral adaptation programs. In response, in 2012, the Solomon Islands government in collaboration with a range of partners adopted a more integrated and holistic approach to climate change adaptation based on province-wide coordination and development interventions across government and civil society. Choiseul Province in the northwest of the country was selected to trial this new approach. The Choiseul Integrated Climate Change Adaptation Program ([CHICCHAP](#)) became the focus of the Solomon Islands effort to develop climate change adaptation strategies.

Nevertheless, most adaptation interventions still need to be made at the local level and in this presentation we focus on an Ecosystem based Adaptation (EbA) approach led by the Secretariat for Pacific Environmental Program (SPREP) developed in conjunction with the communities of Choiseul Bay and Sasamunga with support from USAID. A key focus of this project is the recognition that a majority of the communities of Choiseul live relatively simple agrarian lifestyles and their income and basic survival needs are almost exclusively obtained from the ecosystem services provided by the natural resources within their locality. Any adaptation solution needs to recognise that common adaptation solutions that require intensive engineering or infrastructure development may be beyond the means of communities such as this. The ecosystems within and adjoining these localities not only provide a wide range of critical ecosystem services to the people who live in these locations such as food security and coastal protection but are also culturally important as well as containing biota that is of regional and international significance.

Key aspects of the project were to provide background information on the ecosystems, ecosystem services and ecological value of the natural assets for the local communities and to develop EbA plans that focused on specific, community-based activities that could be implemented by these local communities over the next few years.