



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



World
Heritage
Convention

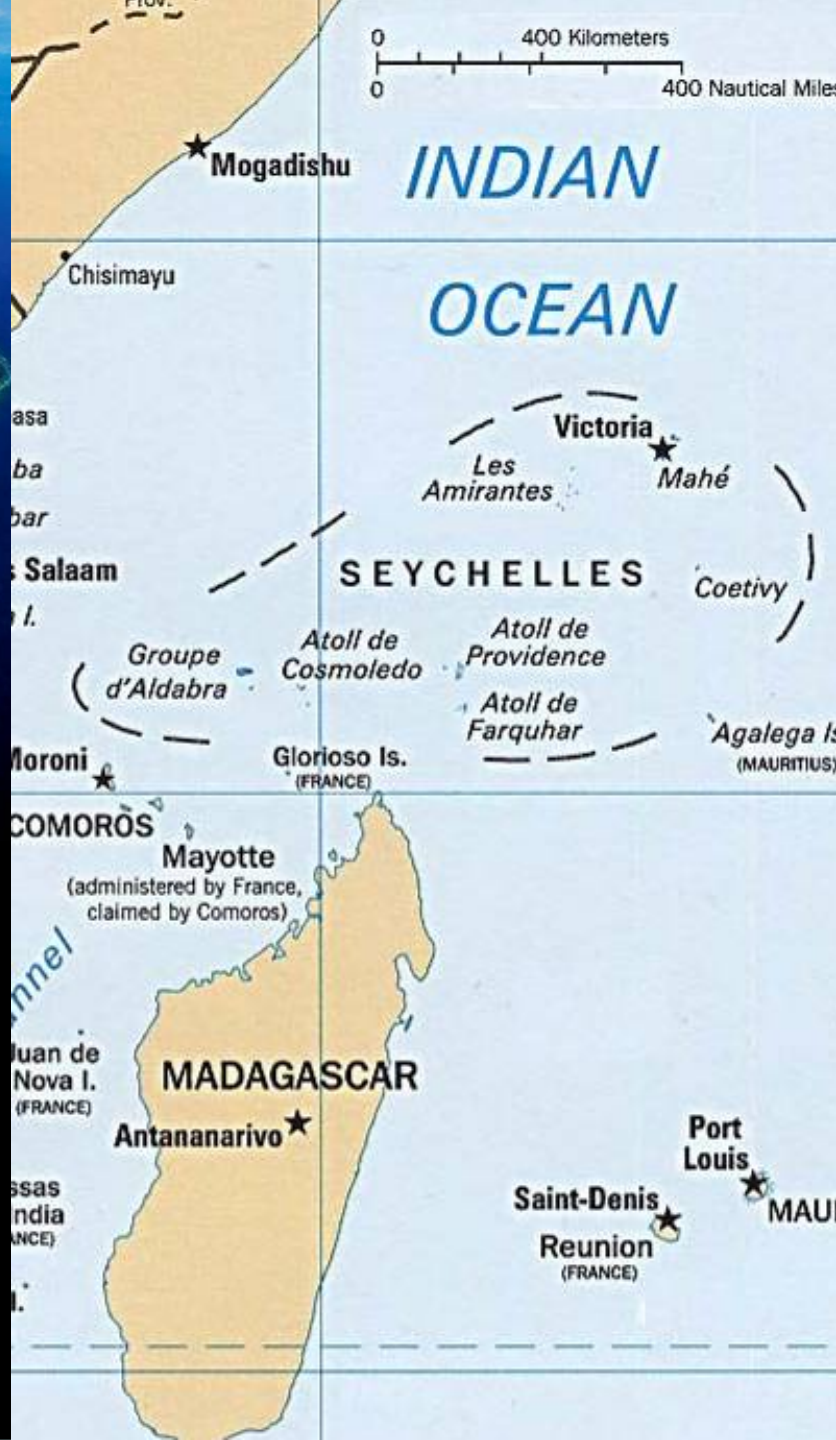
A conservation success story that inspires

Dr Frauke Fleischer-Dogley



Aldabra Atoll
SEYCHELLES

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE
SINCE 1982



aldabra atoll



seychelles islands foundation



vallée de mai

PRE-UNESCO RECENT HISTORY



1960s

1962-67 – The Aldabra Military Affair – international outcry

1967 – Long term research by Royal Society of London starts



1970s

1971 – Royal Society Research Station established on Aldabra

1976 – Returned to Seychelles: designated **Strict Nature Reserve**

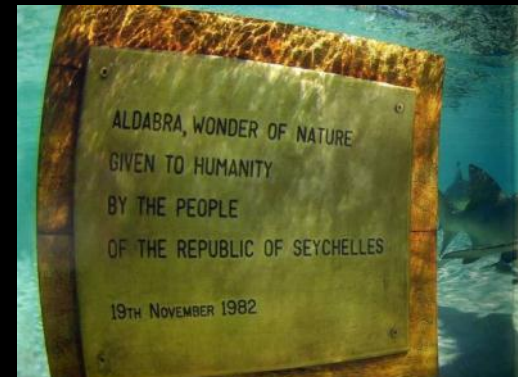
1979 – Seychelles Islands Foundation set up to manage Aldabra



1980s

1981 – Designated **Special Reserve**

1982 – Inscribed on **UNESCO World Heritage** list





For the benefit of humanity, SIF strives to ensure continued management and protection of Aldabra and aims to:

- Continue research & monitoring started by the Royal Society
- Advance & attract scientific research at an international level
- Target & use results to further understanding of biodiversity & conservation
- Implement conservation strategies informed by this research

How has this been achieved in the last 30 years?

No exploitation or disturbance of any type for over 40 years

Population size never more than 30 people, usually 10-20

Increasing active conservation management

Increasing conservation value...





Aldabra was the
first nesting green
turtle population to
be protected in the
Indian Ocean

500-800 turtles nesting
annually in late 1960s*

**Mortimer et al. 2011. Chelonian Conservation Biology*



Today

- 3100-5225 green turtles nesting annually*
- Population increase of 500-800% in 40 years*
- Aldabra's green turtle population is largest in the WIO region and growing every year

**Mortimer et al. 2011. Chelonian Conservation Biology*



**Aldabra's tortoises
heavily exploited in 1800s**

Today

- >100,000 tortoises
- 3 x more than Galapagos
- Population stable
- Collaborative research ongoing



Aldabra hosts the World's second
largest frigatebird breeding colony



Today

2011/2012 survey indicates colony has
grown by at least 10% in 30 years



Aldabra Rail

Last flightless bird
in the region



Until 1999: restricted to
three islands due to cats elsewhere

1999: reintroduction of 18 birds to
4th island: Picard

Predicted: 1000 birds on Picard by 2010



Today

- **2011:** survey estimated **2765 rails** on Picard
- More than 2.5 times the estimate
- Estimated 10,000 pairs across atoll



1998

- Listed as **Important Bird Area** (BirdLife International)
- Recognition of globally important bird populations



2001

- First sighting of one dugong for 30 years – seen regularly since then
- Dugongs extinct elsewhere in Seychelles
- Aldabra hosts only dugong population in Seychelles
- In March 2013 the dugong population is estimated at 20-25 individuals





2009

- Aldabra becomes **Ramsar Wetland Site of International Importance**
- Globally representative site for undisturbed marine & coastal wetland habitats



CONVENTION ON WETLANDS

(Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

SIF has become increasingly active in invasive alien species work

Goat Eradication Programme 1981-2012

- **1981:** Decision taken to remove goats
- **1987-2005:** >2000 goats killed
- **2007:** Final eradication phase starts
- **2007-2011:** 223 goats killed
- **August 2012:** Last goat culled



Invasive Species Action



2010

€1 million EU project approved to tackle IAS threats to Seychelles' World Heritage Sites



2014

- Assumption Introduced bird eradication running for 4 yr
- >95% of birds eradicated
- >10 local staff trained in bird control techniques



- 2012**
- Aldabra solar energy system commissioned
 - 4-year project



- Electricity demand decreased by 63%
- Diesel demand reduced by 98%

98% energy now supplied by renewable sources

Institutional capacity



Higher entry level for many positions

More graduates

High level of training by experts

Locals now conducting
research & monitoring
& leading programmes

Increased institutional capacity



International involvement



SIF's recent global reach of staff and collaborators covers 17 countries and 6 continents





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Aldabra Atoll

is one of the 46 World Heritage Marine Sites

“Raising the standard for ocean conservation”

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