



## FUEL PRICE AS AT

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## Island Conservation Society

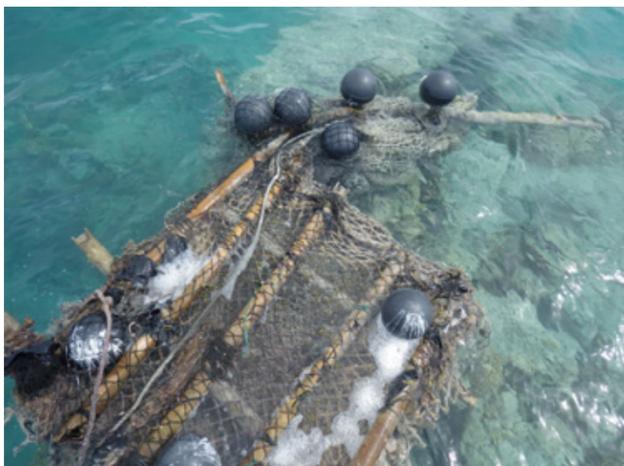
# ICS highlights the threat of FADs to the marine ecosystems of Seychelles

A Fish Aggregating Device or FAD, is a man-made object, deployed into the sea by fishing boats, used to attract pelagic fish such as tuna.



Removing the nets of a FAD caught in corals in deeper waters

Approximately 12,000 FADs are deployed by the purse-seine tuna fishery in Seychelles waters each year, raising serious concerns for the marine biodiversity of our waters and shores. Most of the materials used to build the FADs, such as nets, ropes, and fishing buoys are non-biodegradable. Once abandoned or lost, their presence in the ocean contributes significantly to marine pollution. If not intercepted, they are washed ashore by the ocean currents causing immeasurable damage to coastal habitats. The use of a purse-seine piece of net under the FADs can capture indiscriminately sensitive marine fauna that it surrounds, such as turtles, sharks or other fish species (classified as bycatch). They become entangled and are unable to free themselves, suffering serious injuries and often death due to the force of the nets as they are hauled. Also, FADs are a very effective fishing method that increase risks of overfishing, and we have seen that stocks for some tuna species have become already overfished in the western Indian Ocean over the last 15-20 years, which coincides with the devel-



Example of a FAD

opment of the use of FADs by the tuna fishing industry.

From the mountains of physical evidence collected over several years, ICS has established that FADs are the causes of the most severe environmental damage, including beaching on most, if not all, of the islands of Seychelles, particularly the outer islands. The severe damage to healthy coral

reefs, inshore habitats, and marine species caught in abandoned nets is alarming. The devastating environmental impact of the drifted non-biodegradable marine debris is unacceptable. It is estimated that the fishing industry contributes over 50% to the enormous gyres of marine debris that pollute the world's oceans, including the Indian Ocean. ICS, therefore, rec-

ognises the urgent need to review and improve FAD management in the Indian Ocean and supports methods or techniques to reduce the environmental impact of FADs through the use of miniature electronic tracking, non-entangling, and biodegradable FAD material to minimise their destructive effects on sensitive marine and coastal habitats.

ICS supports conservation measures submitted by Kenya and Sri Lanka, "On the management of fish aggregating devices (FADs)

in the IOTC Area of Competence". ICS advocates strong measures to clean up the damage already inflicted upon the environment and the ongoing search for measures to prevent future damage.

Therefore, ICS will continue to actively engage with the relevant parties to carry out a review and revision of (i) the existing FAD MANAGEMENT PLAN and (ii) the new FAD WATCH Agreement during this calendar year. It engages to have further discussions on the following:

- The need to better regulate the continuous use of FADs and their numbers, and to look for alternative methods less polluting and damaging for the environment.

- the role of ICS and/or the Islands Development Company in the mitigation of environmental damage to marine flora and fauna and subsequent clean-up operations at all islands where they operate.

- The acknowledgement and enforcement of the generally accepted principle that the polluter must pay for the environmental damage and subsequent clean-up across all islands.

- Funding of serious and ongoing research into minimising the negative environmental impact of FADs through electronic tracking and more biodegradable FAD designs and construction.

ICS aims to engage in all efforts that will lead eventually to the implementation of national policies for the benefit of our fragile ecosystem. In achieving, this ICS will look to the support and coordination of all stakeholders and the Seychelles public.

A copy of the Position Paper is accessible from <http://www.island-conservationseychelles.com/news>



Marine creatures like sea turtles caught in nets



Pulling FAD onboard a boat

## Presidential speech

# Speech by President Wavel Ramkalawan at the occasion of the 2021 International Day of Peace

Brothers and sisters.

Today, as we celebrate the International Day of Peace, let us reflect on how, as a small island nation, we can spread the message of peace, not only for a prosperous future but also for a better present.

During this time of reflection, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, we think about all the lives lost because of the Coronavirus. We think of the families in sorrow and grieving the loss of their loved ones. We stand in solidarity with anyone affected in one way or another by the Coronavirus, and we thank the Lord for

all those who have recovered and returned to good health.

On behalf of the people of Seychelles, I want to extend a special thanks to the healthcare workers and workers of essential services tirelessly working since the pandemic began. We acknowledge your dedication, patience, courage and determination in taking care of yourselves, your colleagues, your families and your fellow brothers and sisters. We stand in solidarity with you all and our expression of thanks is a symbolic gesture to strengthen the ideals of peace and love.

Every year, the United Na-

tions invites us to stand against acts and thoughts of violence, hatred, vengeance and jealousy. Today is a day to reflect on promoting peace and harmony through our actions and amongst our family, community and society. It is imperative for us to have love and peace in our own heart if we want to promote love and peace! Let us use this day to stand up against all forms of violence and to come together as one nation, united for the good of Seychelles, our beautiful and blessed country.

Brothers and sisters, today is a day for us to join our efforts in healing and building a better

Seychelles - a Seychelles where peace, love, unity, solidarity and harmony reign in the hearts and lives of everyone. Today, I pray that with the abundant blessings of our Lord, Seychelles and the rest of the world will heal from the COVID-19 pandemic; that our economy will recover and continue to sustain the future of our children; and that our country will stay safe so that we continue to welcome visitors to our islands.

I wish you all a happy International Day of Peace and that the Lord continues to bless and guide us all towards a prosperous future.



President Wavel Ramkalawan