



FIRST NATIONAL COMMUNICATION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK  
CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

© Ministry of Home Affairs, Housing & Environment, 2001  
Published 2001 by Ministry of Home Affairs, Housing and Environment  
Huravee Building  
Malé 20-05  
Republic of Maldives

ISBN 99915-828-3-5

Concept Design and Layout by Atelier Studios, Maldives.  
Printed at Novelty Press, Maldives.



## Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1 National Circumstance</b>	<b>12</b>
1.1 Geography	12
1.2 Climate	17
1.3 Biodiversity in the Maldives	21
1.4 Population	21
1.5 Socio-cultural character	23
1.6 Transportation system in the Maldives	23
1.7 Energy production and usage	24
1.8 Water resources, usage and supply	25
1.9 Agriculture and food security	26
1.9.1 Food storage and distribution	27
1.9.2 Heavy import dependency	27
1.10 Health	28
1.10.1 Health care facilities and services	28
1.10.2 Burden of diseases	29
1.11 Economy	30
1.11.1 Primary imports and exports	30
1.11.2 Tourism	31
1.11.3 Fisheries	32
1.11.4 The International Airport	33
1.12 Research and systematic observations	34
1.13 Maldives in the international arena	34
<b>2. National Greenhouse Gas Inventory</b>	<b>36</b>
2.1 Introduction	36
2.2 Methodology	36
2.2.1 Assumptions	37
2.3 Results and Analysis	38
2.3.1 Emissions of CO <sub>2</sub> from the energy sector	38
2.3.2 Emissions of CO <sub>2</sub> by fuel type	38
2.3.3 Methane emission from land fill	39
2.4 Bunkered fuels	39
2.5 Shortcomings encountered when preparing the inventory	39
2.6 Confidence and uncertainty of data in the GHG inventory	40
2.7 Comparisons with other countries	41
2.7.1 The contribution of Maldives to global GHG emissions	41

<b>3. Mitigation of Greenhouse Gas Emissions</b>	<b>43</b>
3.1 Energy	43
3.2 Transport	45
3.3 Solid waste and sewage management	47
3.4 Enhancing sinks in the Maldives	47
<b>4. Vulnerability to climate change</b>	<b>49</b>
4.1 Land loss and beach erosion	53
4.2 Infrastructure damage	59
4.3 Damage to coral reefs	62
4.4 Impacts on the economy	65
4.4.1 <i>Impacts on tourism</i>	65
4.4.2 <i>Impacts on fisheries</i>	68
4.5 Food security	69
4.5.1 <i>Agriculture</i>	69
4.5.2 <i>Food storage and distribution</i>	70
4.6 Water resources	72
4.7 Human health	75
<b>5. Adaptation to Climate Change</b>	<b>79</b>
5.1 Adaptative measures	79
5.1.1 <i>Land loss and beach erosion</i>	79
5.1.2 <i>Infrastructure damage</i>	81
5.1.3 <i>Damage to coral reefs</i>	82
5.1.4 <i>Damage to tourist industry</i>	83
5.1.5 <i>Agriculture and food security</i>	85
5.1.6 <i>Water resources</i>	85
5.2 Capacity to adapt	87
5.2.1 <i>Human resource development</i>	87
5.2.2 <i>Institutional strengthening</i>	90
5.2.3 <i>Research and systematic observations</i>	91
5.2.4 <i>Public awareness and education</i>	92
<b>6. Policy and measures</b>	<b>95</b>
6.1 Current environmental policies	95
6.2 Recommended policy measures	96
<b>National Implementation Strategy for addressing climate change - Policy Matrix</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>7. Projects</b>	<b>104</b>



## LIST OF FIGURES, TABLES, BOXES, MAPS AND PROJECTS

### FIGURES

Figure 1-1	The standard theory of atoll formation..
Figure 1-2	Cross section through a typical Maldivian atoll
Figure 1-3	Distribution of inhabited islands by island size
Figure 1-4	Average annual temperature variation for Malé
Figure 1-5	Annual variations of total rainfall for Malé and Gan
Figure 1-6	Percentage of wind direction for Hulhule (1980- 1999)
Figure 1-7	Average seasonal variations of wind speeds for Male'
Figure 1-8	Distribution of Maldives population by age
Figure 1-9	Population of Maldives (1911- 2000)
Figure 1-10	Spatial population distribution for Maldives
Figure 1-11	Infant mortality rate 1980- 1999
Figure 1-12	Tuna catch in Maldives
Figure 2-1	Relative contributions of fuels to meeting national energy demand
Figure 2-2	CH <sub>4</sub> emissions from solid waste disposal systems
Figure 2-3	CO <sub>2</sub> emissions by energy sector (Gg)
Figure 4-1a	Transect of Dhekanbaa
Figure 4-1b	Transect of Fuvahmulah
Figure 4-1c	Transect of Hithaadhoo
Figure 4-2a	Elevation contour map and street map of Malé overlaid
Figure 4-2b	Map showing areas that would be inundated in 2025 (high scenario)
Figure 4-2c	Map showing areas that would be inundated in 2050 (high scenario)
Figure 4-2d	Map showing areas that would be inundated in 2100 (low scenario)
Figure 4-2e	Map showing areas that would be inundated in 2100 (high scenario)
Figure 4-3	Reported Diarrhoea cases for 1999

### TABLES

Table 1	Summary of Maldives National Circumstances
Table 1-1	Ten largest islands of the Maldives
Table 1-2	33 year monthly means (1967- 1999) for Hulhule Station
Table 1-3	Measured temperature extremes for Malé
Table 1-4	Rainfall extremes for Malé
Table 1-5	Average monthly wind speeds for central regions of Maldives (1968- 1999)
Table 1-6	Tidal recordings for Hulhulé station
Table 1-7	Historic storms driven by cyclone
Table 1-8	Terrestrial biodiversity of the Maldives
Table 1-9	Marine biodiversity of the Maldives
Table 1-10	Endemic birds/ sub species of Maldives
Table 1-11	Percentage population without access to electricity
Table 1-12	Health care facilities and services available at Maldives
Table 1-13	Status of most common diseases in the Maldives
Table 1-14	GDP for Maldives 1995- 1999
Table 1-15	Composition of main imports
Table 1-16	Composition of main exports from Maldives
Table 1-17	Tourism contribution to economy (1990- 1999)
Table 1-18	Some of the environmental conventions signed and ratified by the Maldives
Table 2-1	National CO <sub>2</sub> emissions, by fuel type
Table 2-2	Relative contributions of fuels to emissions of CO <sub>2</sub>
Table 2-3	Internationally bunkered fuels
Table 2-4	Relative CO <sub>2</sub> emissions from the energy sector
Table 2-5	Comparison of CO <sub>2</sub> emissions

Table 2-6	Emission of GHGs from various sectors for the Maldives
Table 4-1	Climate Change scenarios
Table 4-2	Sectoral studies done in the V&A study islands
Table 4-3	Coral cover at the survey sites after the bleaching in 1998
Table 4-4	Post and pre bleaching survey results for the 1998 mass bleaching event
Table 4-5	Variation of tuna catching during ENSO events
Table 4-6	Case study for food security
Table 4-7	Case study for water resources
Table 4-8	Cause specific mortality

## BOXES

Box 1-1	A typical resort setting in the Maldives
Box 1-2	Some of the global programmes of research and systematic observation participated by the Maldives.
Box 4-1	V&A Assessment process
Box 4-2	Participation of the V&A process
Box 4-3	V&A case study 1
Box 4-4	V&A case study 2
Box 4-5	V&A case study 3
Box 4-6	V&A case study 4
Box 4-7	V&A case study 5
Box 4-8	V&A case study 6
Box 4-9	V&A case study 7
Box 5-1	Overseas training
Box 5-2	CZM Island Training
Box 5-3	Climate Change Policy Workshop

## MAPS

Map 1-1	Location of the Republic of Maldives in the Indian Ocean
Map 1-2	The Republic of Maldives
Map 4-1	Aerial photographs and location maps of the islands selected for V&A assessment

## PROJECTS

Project 7-1a	Appraising coastal erosion in the Maldives: laying the foundation for adaptation to sea level rise and climate change
Project 7-1b	Development of practical adaptation measures to combat beach erosion in the Maldives
Project 7-1c	A coastal erosion management strategy for the Maldives
Project 7-2	Feasibility study for a national population consolidation strategy and programme
Project 7-3	Upgrading of Gan airport for international operations
Project 7-4	Programme for fisheries conservation measures and community-based reef resource management
Project 7-5	Development of Food security in the Maldives
Project 7-6	The use of infiltration galleries to supply ground water in the islands
Project 7-7	Climatic influences on the spread and transmission of vector borne diseases
Project 7-8	Alternative renewable energy sources for the outer islands of Maldives
Project 7-9	The use of solar distillation as a source of freshwater for outer islands and Malé
Project 7-10	Development of sustainable inter-island based mass transportation system
Project 7-11	Development of sewage treatment facilities
Project 7-12	The integrated waste management system designed to mitigate GHG emissions