



## COMMUNITIES

### HOW DOES THE ISLAND-OCEAN CONNECTION CHALLENGE BENEFIT ISLAND COMMUNITIES?

The Island-Ocean Connection Challenge is a direct response to the triple threats of failing ocean health, climate change, and biodiversity extinction. **Island communities are disproportionately impacted by these crises, both ecologically and economically.**

Island communities are immensely vulnerable to storm surges, flooding, and erosion. Restored coastal habitats such as barrier islands, coral reefs, and wetlands can increase climate resilience and offer greater protection to islands and their people.

In addition, these communities face depleting land and ocean resources. This can result in pervasive, long-term harm to local industries and can negatively impact tourism. **Restoring island-marine ecosystems and conserving biodiversity can significantly boost local economies and expand livelihoods.**



Small-scale fisheries benefit from thriving island-marine ecosystems and sustainable tourism.

### THE ISLAND-OCEAN CONNECTION CHALLENGE AIMS TO RESTORE AT LEAST 40 ISLANDS BY 2030 BY SUPPORTING AND COLLABORATING WITH THEIR COMMUNITIES.

We are assembling a global coalition of funders, Indigenous Peoples, community champions, scientists, nongovernmental organizations, and governmental leaders. Together we strive to understand these communities' pressing conservation issues, co-create solutions, and support their resiliency.



## SHIFTING POWER DYNAMICS FOR ISLAND NATIONS

Western conservation efforts often create artificial boundaries between land and ocean science, thereby limiting the efficacy of management programs. But Indigenous Peoples and local communities have long understood and managed their natural resources in the context of island-to-sea connections.

The Challenge prioritizes key local partnerships to ensure an integrated, unified approach that is tailored to each island. We aim to inspire and galvanize communities with new economic opportunities in ocean-based technologies, renewable energies, aquaculture, and many other 'blue growth' sectors.

The Challenge partners are committed to establishing a new era of locally led initiatives that promote island communities' ecological and economic resilience.

*A traditional Palauan legend holds that the hawksbill sea turtle (pictured) once carried a megapode across the ocean, because the chicken-like bird cannot swim. To return the favor, the megapode promised to always protect the turtle's hatchlings. To this day, we find turtle and megapode nests close to one another.*



The hawksbill sea turtle is just one example of how island-specific animals and plant life are deeply embedded in local culture, traditions and folklore.

## JOIN US TODAY IN THIS CAMPAIGN OF HOPE AND RESILIENCE!

We're calling on funders, Indigenous Peoples, community champions, scientists, nongovernmental organizations, and governmental leaders to maximize the benefits to these interconnected ecosystems.

Support the Island-Ocean Connection Challenge at [jointheiocc.org](https://jointheiocc.org)

For inquiries, fact sheets or interview requests, please email [iocc@islandconservation.org](mailto:iocc@islandconservation.org)