

MAALHOSMADULU UTHURUBUREE VAADHOO COUNCIL IDHAARA

REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

R. VAADHOO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Proposal for the development of R. Vaadhoo North West Area as a Tourism Zone

Maalhosmadulu Uthuruburi Vaadhoo Council Office represented by the Maalhosmadulu Uthuruburi Vaadhoo Council is planning to develop the North West Corner of its Island for local and international tourism. The plan is to lend its allocated lands for the development of tourist accommodation facilities and associated commercial and recreational services facilities to prospective leaseholders.

1. The Project Description

1.1 Introduction

R. Vaadhoo North West Corner Development Project aims to supply total of 3 ha of land out of which 1.5 ha of land allocated to design and develop tourist guesthouses and associated service facilities including restaurants, food court stalls, cafes, spas, child care, swimming pool, scuba diving and entertainment facilities on the site.

The remaining 1.5 ha of land for the development of other commercial activities related to the guest house. Including travel agents, rentals, water sports, gymnasium training facilities and a retail center where locals can sell souvenirs and food item.

Vaadhoo is one of the unique islands in Raa Atoll which is located in a massive reef with a vast area of shallow lagoon which has potential to develop large scale water sports facilities and fishing. Vaadhoo is in excess to several nearby reefs which is rich for diving and snorkeling. The large shallow reef has potential to reclaim adequate land for further development, long stretch of beach, accessibility via Ifushu Airport in Raa Atoll within 15 to 20 min by sea, the neighbor populated islands and employment or job creation potential.

The skilled population of Vaadhoo is famous for hand crafting, generations of cultural activities followed, local products and traditional tastes in the reason. The project is expected to create an impetus is the region's growth and development of small and medium enterprises (SME's).

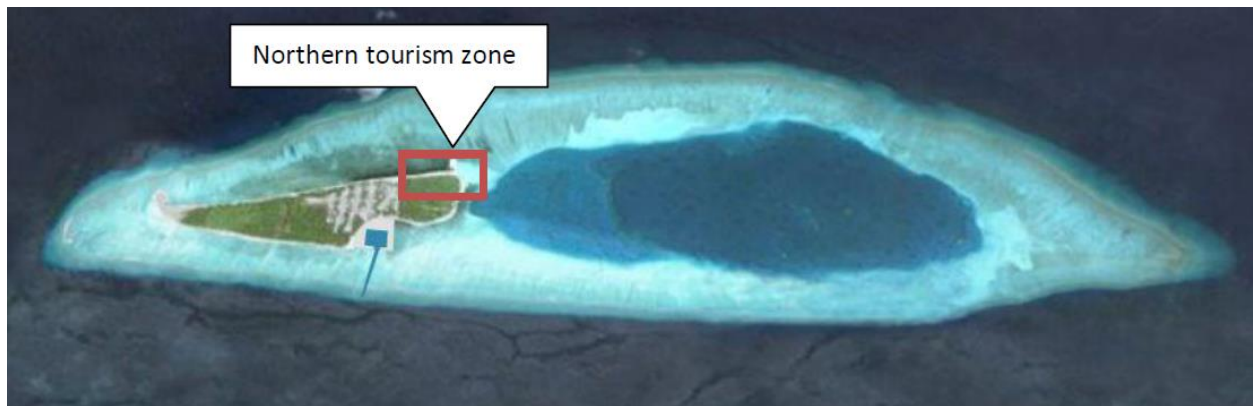
1.2 Scope and Objectives

The development aims to lease land for the guesthouses and associated Commercial activities to locals at GOM endorsed lease rates. The project will maximize SME development and benefits to locals through employment and trade from the Project. The 3 ha of land may be leased to interested and competent investors in accordance to the relevant laws and regulations of Maldives.

All buildings and facilities shall follow project concept, development standards and guidelines set by Ministry of Housing.

1.3 Project Location

Raa Vaadhoo is formed on a large reef at the north east of Raa atoll. The project is planned to develop on the North West Corner of island. The project area is naturally formed with a long stretch of beach including a long natural sand bank (Thundi).



Project sight

Figure: 1.1 Bird eye of the location

1.4 Project Justification

Tourism being the largest industry in Republic of Maldives plays a significant role in the economy. It accounts 28% of GDP being more than 60% of Maldives foreign exchange rate. R. Vaadhoo North West Corner Development plan would introduce tourism to the region enabling more employment opportunities and create new subsidiaries.

Vaadhoo being one of the agricultural islands in Raa atoll, the proposed project would boost agriculture industry. Further, it would improve transportation business across region, handcrafting and fishing industry.

The project addresses the following objective.

- Develop tourism industry in the region.
- Optimize development while retaining existing natural beauty.
- Provide new employment opportunities in the region.
- Develop transportation business.
- Provide market for local products such as souvenir producers in Vaadhoo.
- Develop market for farmers.
- Create a market for Safari/ yacht operators and divers.
- Promote traditional medicine and local tastes.

Allocated area for Tourism
Measurements: total 3 Hetares



Figure: 1.2 Site measurements

2. Key Project Features, Components and Facilities

1. The following are the main facilities of the Project:

- a. tourist guesthouses
- b. water sports center
- c. safari jetty to the deep lagoon
- d. restaurants
- e. spas and recreational facilities
- f. gymnasium
- g. training facilities
- h. a retail center where locals can sell souvenirs and food item

3. The lease hold period is 50 years.

2. Requirement for Investment and Site management

- a. Investment in utilities (power, water, sewerage system) provision for the facilities within the project site. (environment friendly methods of shall be preferred)
- b. Land lease to prospective leaseholders
- c. Access and site security management
- d. Application and administration of service fees where applicable
- e. Solid waste collection and disposal from the site
- f. Investment and development of common facilities and areas (such as, but not limited to development and maintenance of entrance gateways, administrative buildings, construction of roadside site boundary wall, onsite roads and pathways, landscaping general areas and common area lighting).

4. Investment in community development.

- a. Preference in employment to Vaadhoo residents (50% preferred)
- b. assistance in disposal of solid wastes in island
- c. investment in social development projects
- d. provision of assistance for the development of sports
- e. investment in education
- f. facilitate in infrastructure development

- g. assistance in natural disasters and author emergencies

3. Details of Existing Site

The project development site is the North West of Vaadhoo and its allocated land area is a3 ha of land and shallow lagoon.



Figure: 3.1 Bird View of Vaadhoo

3.1 Geographic location

Vaadhoo is located in Southern part of the country and is the second inhabited island in Raa Atoll. The island reef is the one of the largest in the atoll including a deep water lagoon and vast area of shallow lagoon. Geographically the island is located at Longitude 72.991073 and Latitude 5.855380. It is located 194.36 km (120.77 mi) away from Capital island Male'.

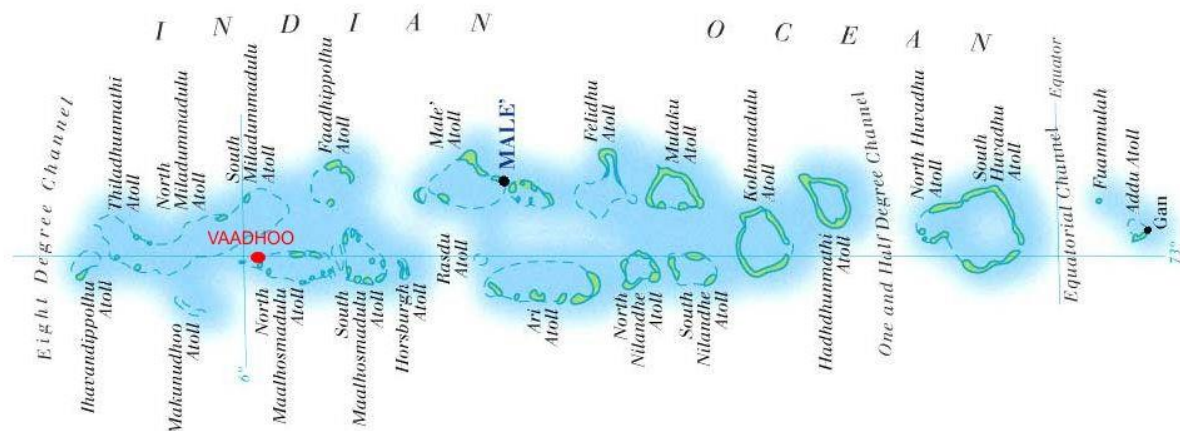


Figure: 3.2 Map of Maldives

3.2 Accessibility

Land - A main road is connected from Vaadhoo Commercial Harbor to the project site.



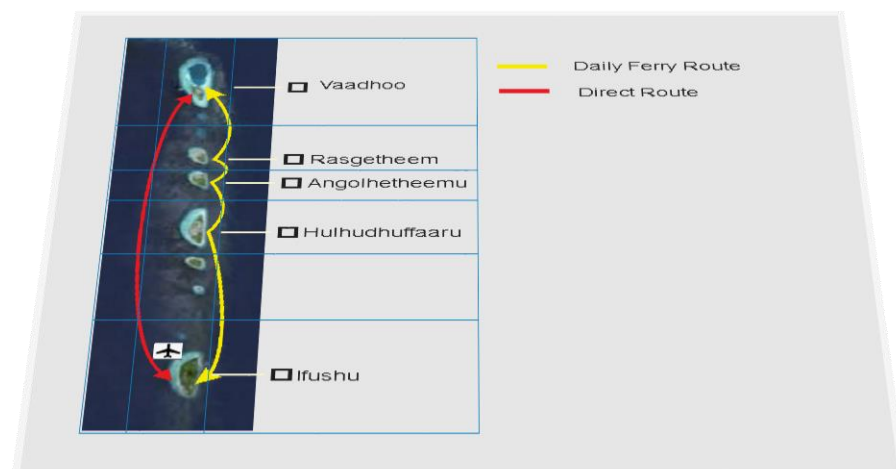
Figure: 3.3 Main road to the site

Air - Ifushu Airport gives access to R. Atoll and the distance between Vaadhoo and Ifushu is a 20 min boat ride. Vaadhoo is located at 194.36Km away from Capital Island, Male and Ibrahim Naasir international Airport.



Figure: 3.4 Ifuru Airport

Sea - Distance from nearest airport (Ifushu Airport) to Vaadhoo is a 15 minute speed boat ride. The Raa Atoll islands are inter connected via a daily scheduled ferry, travelling among islands.



3.3 Site Detail

South end of Vaadhoo is the most attractive landscape in the island. The long stretch of white sand beaches naturally changes its shape on two main Seasons in Maldives. The clear water along the beach shines the beauty attracting hundreds of local tourists each year. Currently Vaadhoo is a famous picnic island around the region, mostly for local tourists from nearby islands.



Figure 3.6: Northern beaches (North Thundi)

The west side lagoon of the Project location is 1.6 M ($\pm 35\%$) deep on average. The bottom is mostly sandy and large area is covered with sea grass. However the North side is 2.1 M ($\pm 35\%$) deep on average.

Beneath the lagoon is mostly plan with white sand. The East contains mostly brain corals and branch corals. The sight is a rich fishing ground.



Figure 3.5: Bottom of lagoon at project site.

The shape of the beach in Project Location is unique in the region and its size varies in two main seasons. The geographic setting gives an extreme view of sunset, providing a romantic environment for the visitors.



Figure 3.6: Sun rise & sunset view of the location

4. Deep Lagoon in Vaadhoo Reef

Vaadhoo Island is located at the south end of one of the largest reef in Raa Atoll. The North of the reef contains a deep lagoon which is 20 to 30 meter deep on average.

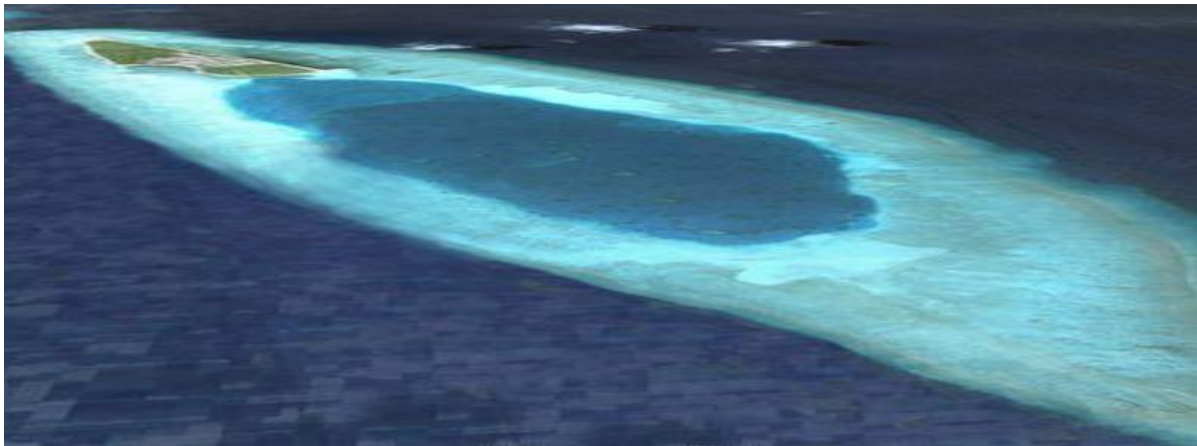


Figure 4.1: Deep Lagoon

This location is a complete natural harbor for large vessels such as cruise boats and yachts within the coral reef. This is a protective location for boats to anchor at all times including rough weather seasons. This is also a good fishing ground which is rich with different types of reef fish and open sea water fish including hammer sharks and stingrays. Large stingrays and sharks can be found regularly from the deep lagoon. This site is also rich with sea turtles. The surrounding is a vast stretch of shallow water as in the Figure 4.1. It is a suitable location for water sports including boat racing and snorkeling.



Figure 4.2: Local fishing boats fishing in deep lagoon

5. Scuba Diving locations

The massive reef of Vaadhoo consist rich marine life. The Reef itself contains attractive natural beauty on every location. The reef is a famous reef fishing ground for nearby islands. There are many deep coral lagoons located around Vaadhoo. Raa atoll consist many rich coral reefs with crystal clear visibility in the water. The coral are rich with natural beauty and are famous diving destinations in the region. There are 2 main reefs opposite to the Project location which is 12 meter deep on average and is just few minutes'

way from the site. In addition, there are several other reefs around Vaadhoo which is rich with marine life. In addition some of the reefs have sand banks called “finolhu” which are perfect picnic islands.



Figure 5.1: Famous scuba diving destinations in Raatolhu atoll.

6. Cross Developments

6.1 North corner development project

The huge reef of Vaadhoo has potential for development of various industries in its boundaries. The surrounding of the Vaadhoo reef is rich with marine life. The shallow lagoon covering bright sandy bottoms under the crystal clear water are the most amazing places in Vaadhoo.

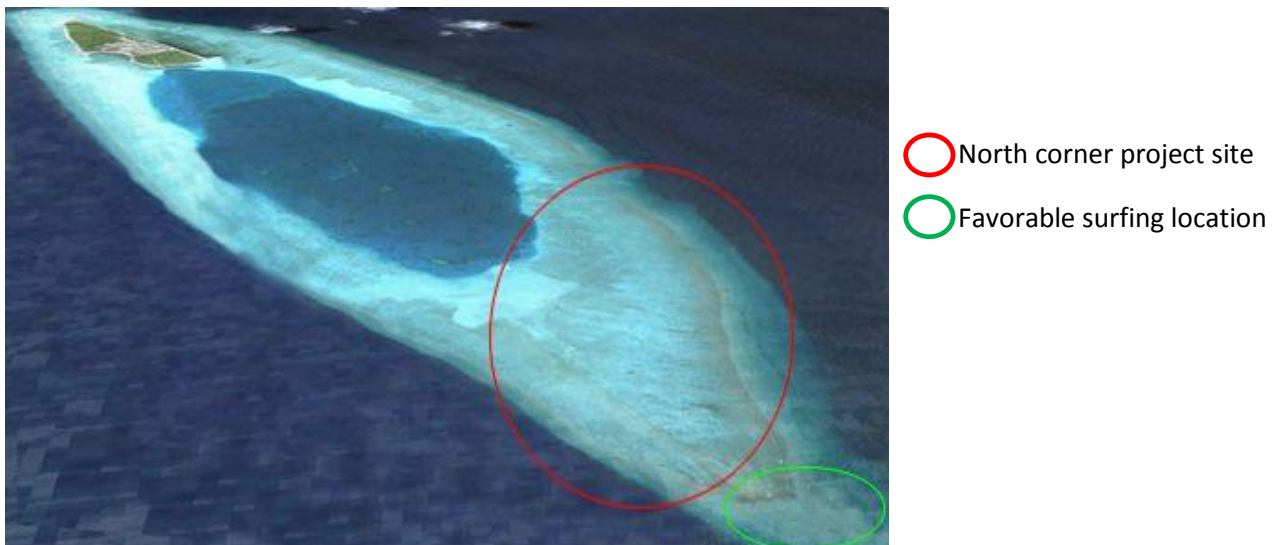


Figure 6.1: North corner of Vaadhoo reef

To exploit the advantage of its natural resources and natural beauty, the Council of Vaadhoo has planned to further develop the Northern corner of the reef for large scale tourism. It has capacity to develop water bungalows, water sport facilities and more. The average depth of the location is 1.5 meter;

hence can easily reclaim a large area of land for resort development. The long history of Vaadhoo has evidence of an existing small island at the location in the past. However due to changes in the water current, the minor island existed has been eroded completely. However the existing location has the space to reclaim the island to develop mass tourism project.

This would be the second largest project in the reef and the Council is currently seeking for interested investor to invest in the location.

6.2 Development plans for supporting industries

The Council's development goals are intended to facilitate the progress of proposed projects. Several subsidiary plans have been designed to enhance the growth of supporting industries.

Heavy concentration has been set for the development of small industries. Multi projects are in the progress of designing to boost the transport facilities, local production, hotels, and commerce.

7. Risks and concerns

7.1 Soil erosion

Vaadhoo Island and its surrounding coral reef have undergone changes in landscape due to soil erosion continuing over decades. This is a common issue faced to the Maldives from global environmental issues. Being the lowest country in the world, Maldives is under constant threat of sea level rising and possible Tsunamis.

The gradual erosion of east side of the island is the main concern to Vaadhoo. The land is protected by natural protective reefs surrounding. However the geographic setting of the reef at east side leads more waves into the beach, hence it advances erosion. As a result, natural sand bank (Thundi) at the project site changes its size and shape over two main seasons in Maldives. The loose sands move side to side on each season along with the waves.

7.2 Political and legal constrains

Government policies and parliament laws are unforeseen concerns to the project. However, the past governments give high consideration to develop the local and international tourism in inhabited islands.

8. General Information of Vaadhoo

8.1 Population

The total population of Vaadhoo stands at 564 in 30 September 2015 and the land area being 44 hectares the population density is 12 people per hectare.

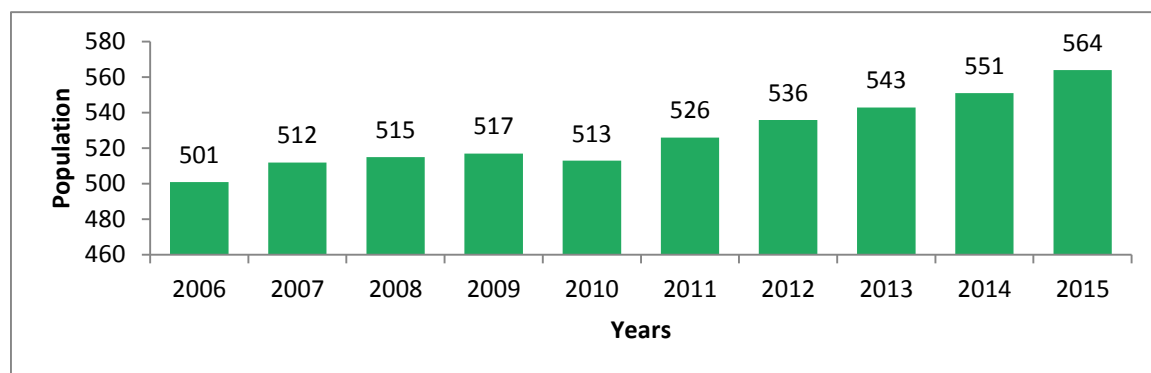
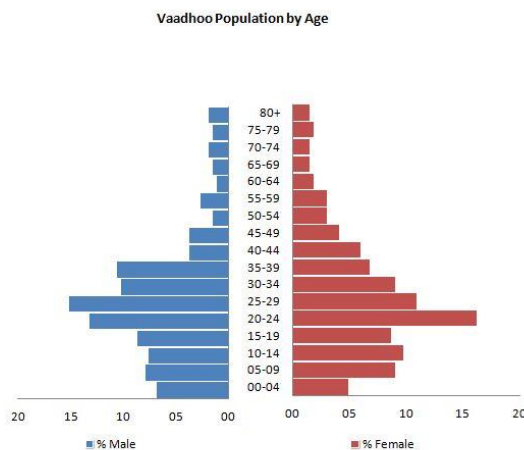


Figure 8.1: Total population

Figure 6.1 above illustrates the increasing trend of the urban population of Vaadhoo. With continuing migration from Vaadhoo for employment opportunities in other islands, mostly Capital (Male') is the reason for slow growth in population. A large number of labors are working in the tourism industry, mostly tourist resorts in other region. However a majority of the young labor force finds employment in Vaadhoo.

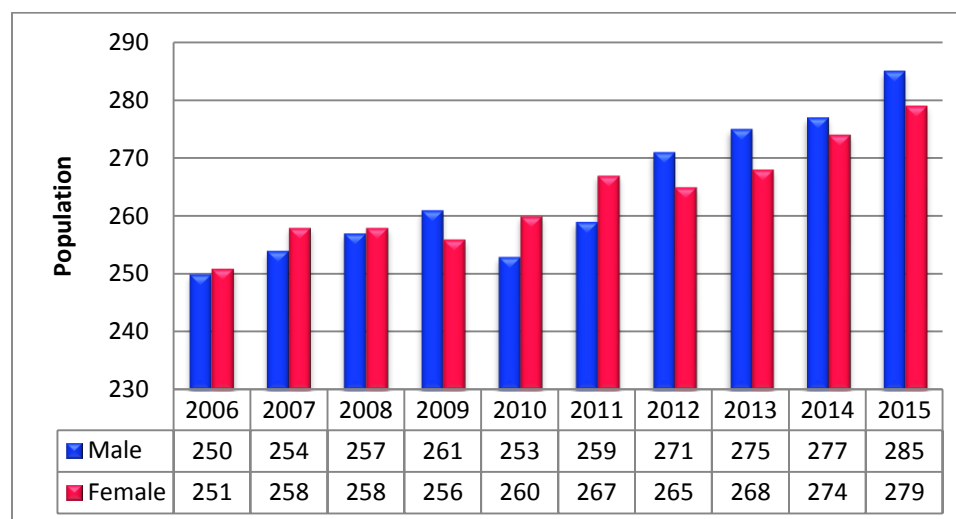


Figure 8.2: Gender distribution

8.2 Culture

The long history of Vaadhoo has developed unique characteristic of an independent culture. Centuries old traditional recopies has evolved in to unique taste, which can be found only in Vaadhoo. Some unique foods such as Eid Bon'di is a good example of rational food which can be found only in Vaadhoo. Cultural entertainments like 'Kuruvali jehun' and 'Boduberu' are the most famous activities in the island. Celebrations of historic and religious festivals have unique events which have passed through generations.



Figure 8.3: Celebration of Eid festival

8.3 Herbal Medicine

Vaadhoo is a famous island for traditional herbal medicine. The methods have been passing through generations and some traditional techniques are very effective to common diseases, broken bones and constant pain. The medicines are prepared combining local herbs and other supplies. Such ingredients include tree leaves, roots, flowers, corals, fish bones, local sand and more. The traditional therapists combine the right proportions of relevant ingredients based on the level of pain and injury. These medicines are sometimes more effective as they are customized accordingly. This skills has been passing through generation and due to continuous practice and applications, the techniques are becoming more effective in time.

8.4 Supporting Economic Sectors in Island

8.4.1 Fishing

This is one of the largest industries in Vaadhoo. The sector employs 35 % of the labor force. The average fish catch is 4.5 metric tons of fish per month. The excess to daily consumption of fish is mostly processed and sold to Capital Island (Male'). Current industry has the capacity to provide a continuous supply of fish to proposed project.

8.4.2 Palm Weaving (Fanvinun)

Palm weaving is second largest industry in the island; more than 50% of the women are involved in the industry. The traditional methods of palm weaving are famous product in the countries tourism industry. It is a historic product used to build traditional huts. Currently the product is used to build similar traditional huts for tourist attraction. Currently the island produces more than 10,000 bundles a year and is sold to tourist resorts.



Figure 8.4: Palm Weaving

8.4.3 Agriculture

This is the third largest industry in Vaadhoo. More than 10% of the total population involves in the sector. Poor soil and scarce arable land have historically limited agriculture to a few subsistence crops, such as coconut, banana, breadfruit, papayas, mangoes, watermelon, taro, betel, chilies, sweet potatoes, tomato, and onions.

However, Vaadhoo soil is most suitable for coconuts, water apple and breadfruit which are the largest production in the island.



Figure 8.5: Agriculture

8.4.4 Animal Harvesting

Few animals such as chicken and rabbits are harvested. However this is a growing industry in the island. Major production is chicken eggs and rabbits.

8.4.5 Fiberglass Industry

This is a fast growing sector in the island. Varieties of fiberglass products are produced from speed boats to household items according to customized orders. Major production involves speed boats, cannon, water sport products and local drums (Boduberu).



Figure 8.6: Local drums (Boduberu)



Figure 8.7: Speed boat production

8.4.6 Handcrafting

The citizens are very skilled with producing tourist souvenirs. Few produces produce at commercial scale.



Figure 8.8: Souvenirs

8.5 Crime rates

Vaadhoo has a very low crime rate. There is no observation of criminal and violence in the past 3 years. In the same period not a single case against theft or drugs has been reported. Vaadhoo can be one of the peaceful islands in the region.

8.6 Social Services

8.6.1 Health Facility

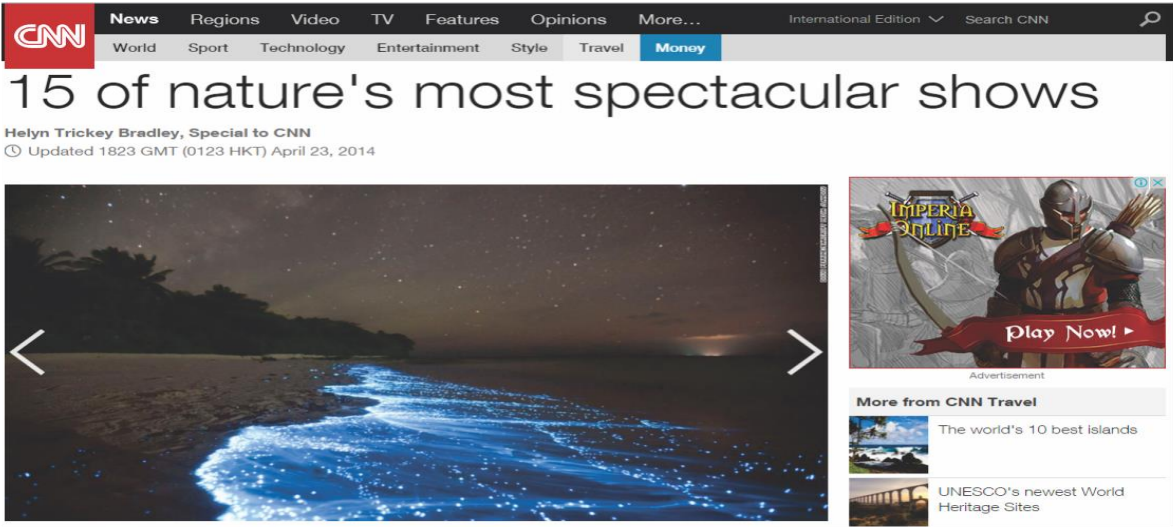
A Community Health Center provides generation consultation facilities including minimum investigation. A pharmacy provides drugs for common diseases. The health center is responsible for conducting programs against common diseases and improving awareness of the people.

8.6.2 Education Facility

The education services are available in two schools including a Pre-school and a Primary and secondary school. The literacy rate in Vaadhoo is 99% and the rate of school leaves going to higher education is increasing gradually.

8.7 Attractive location

8.7.1 Glowing waves



The screenshot shows a CNN news page. The main headline is "15 of nature's most spectacular shows" by Helyn Trickey Bradley, dated April 23, 2014. The featured image is a night scene of a beach with glowing blue waves. Below the image, there is a section titled "Glowing phytoplankton" with social media sharing icons (Email, Facebook, Twitter, and a menu icon). The text describes the phenomenon of bioluminescence on Vaadhoo Island in the Maldives. To the right of the main article, there are several smaller sections: an advertisement for "IMPERIA ONLINE", a "More from CNN Travel" section with links to "The world's 10 best islands" and "UNESCO's newest World Heritage Sites", a "Breaking News" section with a story about a shooting at Tennessee State University, and a "FLATBUT" advertisement. At the bottom right, there are two more small images: one of a man being abducted and another of divers underwater.

Glowing phytoplankton

Where else can you walk on the beach at night and leave nothing but blue, sparkling footprints?

Visit Vaadhoo Island where millions of blue starry lights gleam in the crashing surf. The small island is part of the Raa Atoll in the stunning Maldives archipelago in the Indian Ocean.

The lights emanate from tiny marine microbes which, when jostled by the ocean waters, create a cellular-level chemical reaction that emits light. The effect is startling and romantic and even disorienting when, on starry nights, the ocean appears to mirror the sky.

Stay nearby at the ultra-luxurious [Conrad Maldives Rangali Island](#) resort, which spans two islands and features an all-glass undersea restaurant. Day trips to surrounding islands are also available.

[10 record-setting natural wonders in the U.S.](#)

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Divers dwarfed by massive creature

Figure 8.8: Glowing waves

Reference: <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/04/22/travel/nature-must-see-shows/>

8.7.2 Historic sites

There is historic evidence that people have been living in Vaadhoo for hundreds of years. The sign of ruins found in various parts of the island suggests the establishment of people in various locations of the island in different times.



Figure 8.9: Centuries old cemetery



Figure 8.10: First island administrative building

8.7.3 Attractive locations



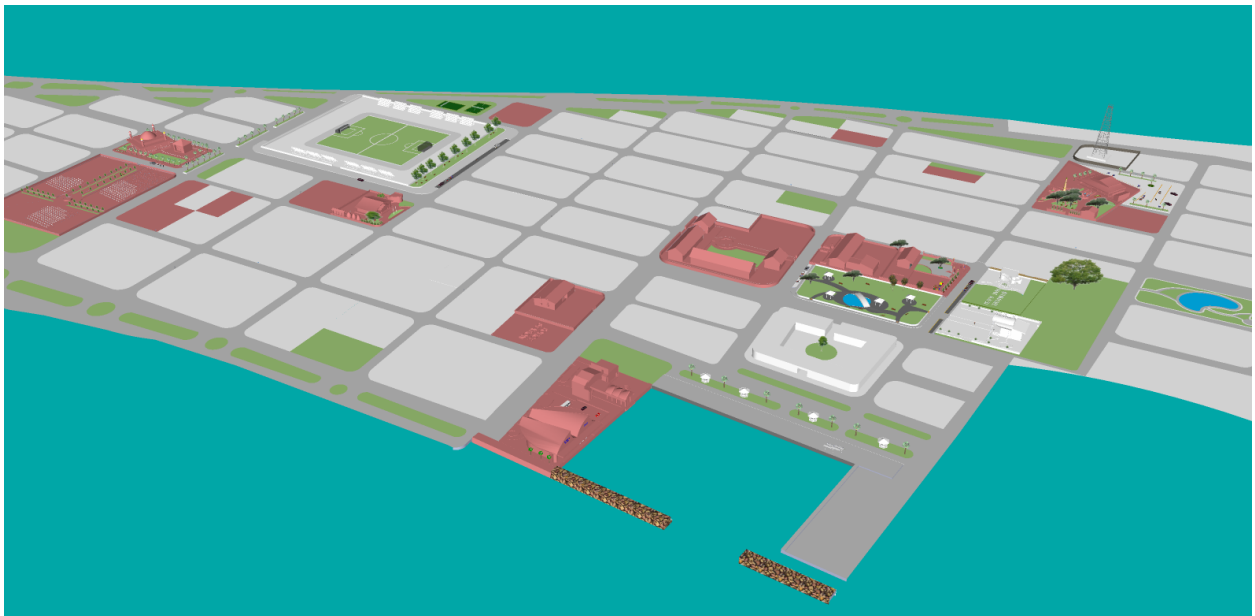
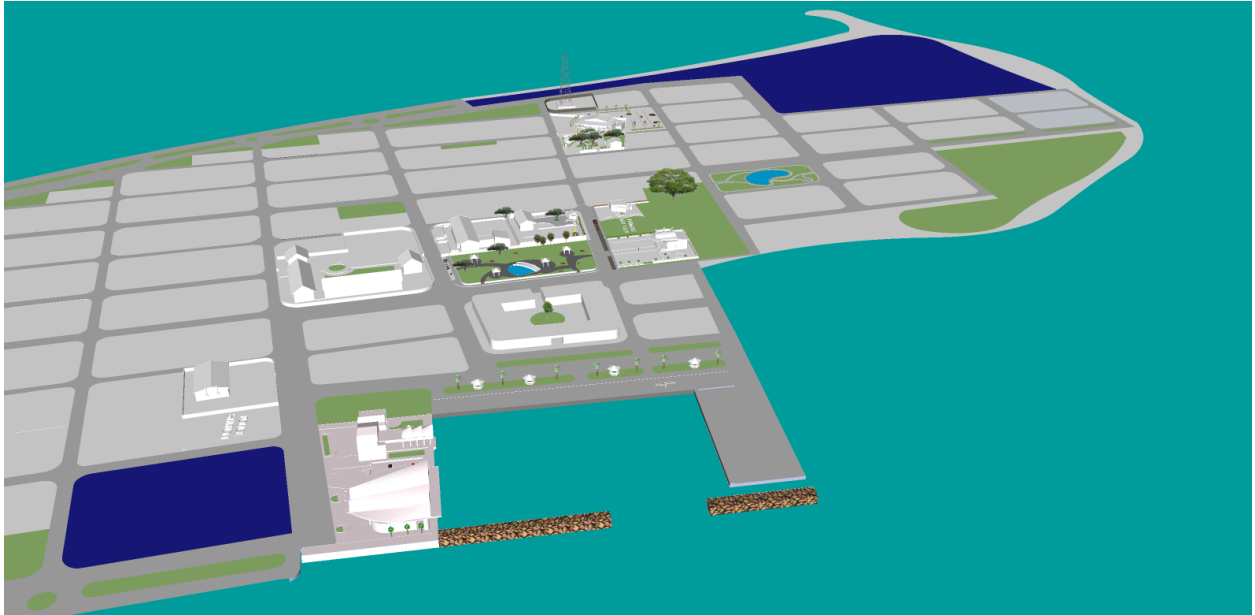


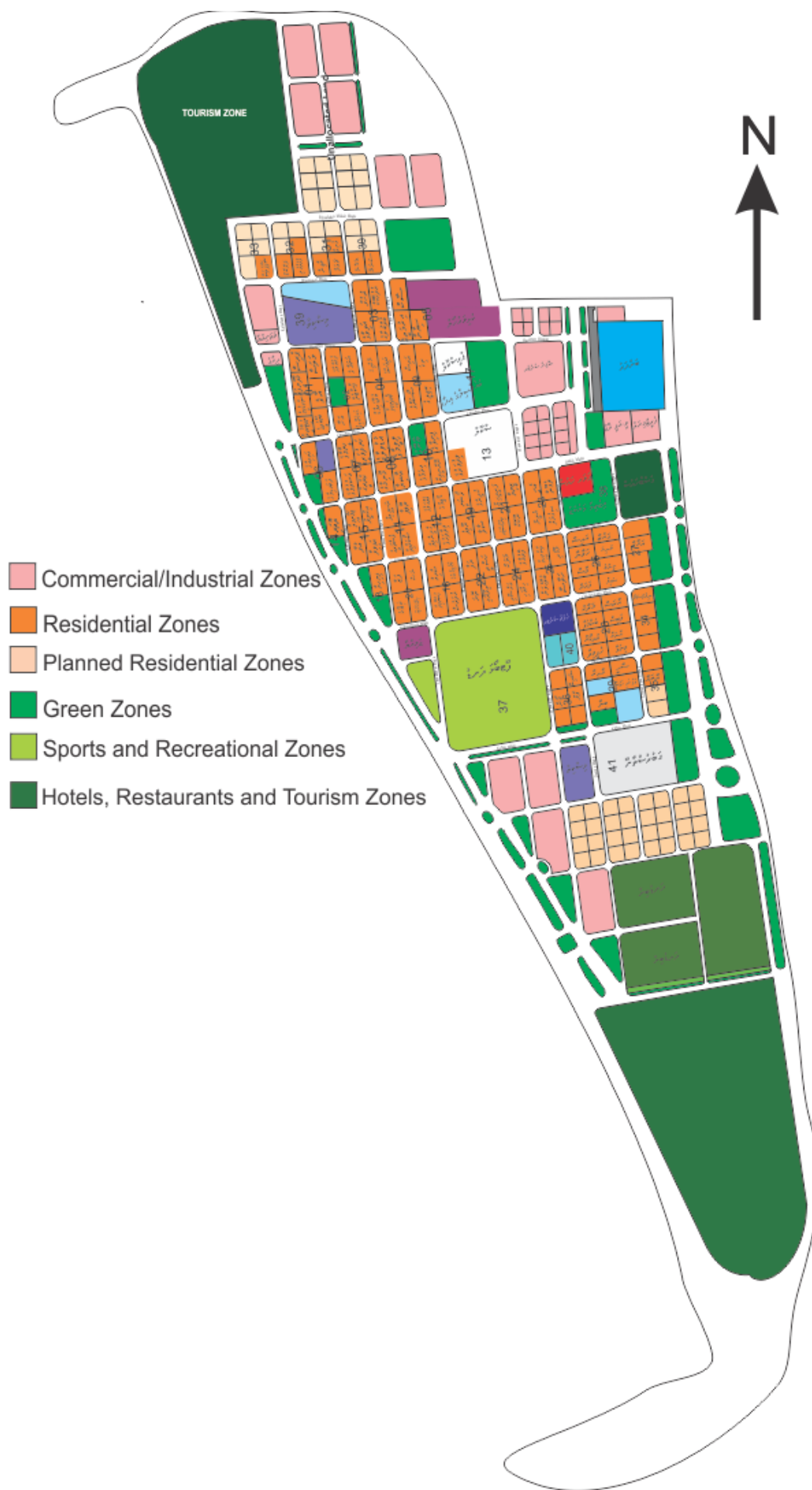
Figure 8.11: Natural sand bank (Thundi) at the project site.



Figure 8.12: Government administrations

9. Proposed Land Use plan





10. Reference

- Vaadhoo

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Email: council@vaadhoo.gov.mv

Phone: (+960)6580074

- Ministry of Trade and industry

Web: www.trade.gov.mv

- Ministry of Tourism

Web: www.tourism.gov.mv

