



Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy
Male', Republic of Maldives

Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) Final Assessment Summary

Potential OECM: Soneva Jani Potential OECM

CRITERIA	RESPONSE		
	YES	UNCERTAIN	NO
SCREENING			
Criterion 1: site is not a PA	x		
Criterion 2: There is a reasonable likelihood that the site supports important biodiversity values	x		
FINAL ASSESSMENT			
Criterion 3: Site is a geographically defined area	x		
Criterion 4: Site is confirmed to support important biodiversity values	x		
Criterion 5: Institutions or mechanisms exist to govern and manage the site	x		
Criterion 6: Governance and management of the site achieve or are expected to achieve the in-situ conservation of important biodiversity values.	x		
Criterion 7: In-situ conservation of important biodiversity values is expected to be for the long term.	x		

- A site with a **'YES' response to every criterion** is a confirmed OECM, subject to consent and approval by the governing authority.
- A site with a combination of **'YES' and 'UNCERTAIN' responses or all 'UNCERTAIN' responses**, remains a candidate OECM, until further information or other changes allow it to be confirmed as an OECM.
- A site with **one or more 'NO' responses** in the full assessment stage, is not currently an OECM but might be re-assessed in the future if a change at the site means that all criteria are now met.



Final Assessment: Recognising an OECM

Name of Potential OECM: Soneva Jani Potential OECM

Criterion and Response

Criterion	Questions	Response			Justification
		YES	UNCERTAIN	NO	
Criterion 3: The site is a geographically defined area.	Does the site have clear boundaries?	x			<i>The site has clear boundaries delineated and registered with the governing authority overseeing tourism policies and regulations in the Maldives.</i>
Criterion 4: The site is <u>confirmed</u> to support important biodiversity values	Does information confirm that the site supports at least one of the following important biodiversity values?	x			<i>Overall, the site supports all important biodiversity values except for value 4: Significant population/extent of endemic or range-restricted species or ecosystems. This value is not supported as the site does not have any records of endemic or range restricted species/ecosystems, as of 2026.</i>
	1. Rare, threatened or endangered species and ecosystems.	x			<i>A list of rare, threatened or endangered species, as per the IUCN Global Red List of Species and the Maldives Red List, is provided in the Appendix XIV. These include:</i> - Hawksbill Turtle (<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>) - Green Sea Turtle (<i>Chelonia mydas</i>) - Mangrove Wipray (<i>Urohymnus granulatus</i>) - Reef Manta Ray (<i>Mobula alfredi</i>) - Blacktip Reef Shark (<i>Carcharhinus melanopterus</i>) - Whitetip Reef Shark (<i>Triaenodon obesus</i>) - Chevron Butterflyfish (<i>Chaetodon trifascialis</i>) - Dick's Damselfish (<i>Plectrogliphidodon dickii</i>)
	2. Natural ecosystems that are under-represented in protected area networks.	x			<i>A bird nesting/roosting islet is identified within zone 1 and a turtle nesting beach is identified within Zone 2 of the Potential OECM.</i>
	3. High level of ecological integrity or intactness.	x			<i>The ecological survey report indicates that the area has high level of ecological integrity and intactness.</i> <i>Summary of some indicators:</i>



					The report indicates that the zones, identified for OECMs recognition, form a spatially connected system comprising of the reef, islet, beach and the mangroves. The zones support key ecological processes: - The variability in the reef matrix reflects the natural spatial heterogeneity rather than site-level degradation. - The coastal mangrove system forms an interface between the marine and terrestrial environments and their location and configuration indicates ecological linkage with the adjacent turtle nesting beach and the coastal fauna. - The enclosed mangroves serves as a distinct seasonal habitat for avifauna. The report further indicates uninterrupted ecological functions of the habitats, despite the environmental pressures. The zonation, based on habitat type and degree of connectivity, recognizes the ecological distinctions while maintaining the integrity of the Potential OECM as a single conservation unit. The site has not undergone any major modifications. Therefore, the natural habitat remains intact with little human disturbances over the years as indicated in the management plan.
	4. Significant population/extent of endemic or range-restricted species or ecosystems.			x	None recorded, as of 2026
	5. Important species aggregations, such as spawning, breeding or feeding area.	x			The turtle nesting beach identified in Zone 2 of the potential OECM boundary is an important nesting site for Hawksbill Sea Turtles.
	6. Importance for ecological connectivity as part of a network of sites in a larger area.	x			Although the site is not adjacent to a protected area, by acting as a refuge for turtle, birds and conserving the mangrove and coral reef ecosystems, the site contributes to the protected area network of Noonu atoll.



Criterion 5: Institutions or mechanisms exist to govern and manage the site	Is there one or more institution(s) or mechanism(s) that govern(s) and manage(s) the site?	x			<i>The site is governed by the resort (governance by private sector). It is managed by Soneva Conservation and Sustainability Maldives (Soneva CMS). The Management Plan provides a summary of the management roles and identifies the roles and responsibilities.</i>
Criterion 6: Governance and management of the site achieve or are expected to achieve the <i>in-situ</i> conservation of important biodiversity values.	Do the governance and management of the site prevent and mitigate threats, and conserve the site's important biodiversity values, or are they expected to do so?	x			<i>In addition to identifying the threats to the site and governance roles and responsibilities, the management plan provides compliance and enforcement measures and procedures within the OECM zones. Use of technology to enhance the efforts is also described.</i>
Criterion 7: In-situ conservation of important biodiversity values is expected to be long-term	Is there a reasonable likelihood that the important biodiversity values for which the site is identified will be conserved in-situ in the long-term?	x			- The management plan identifies management objectives and strategies, with actions, indicators, and priorities. The strategies address key threats within the area. - The governance of the area is clearly defined with roles and responsibilities identified. - The management plan also highlights the constraints and opportunities for the Potential OECM. - The management plan provides a monitoring and evaluation plan for the Potential OECM. - The Management plan also identifies alignment with IUCN Green List Standard and use of Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT-4) as future actions, to ensure that the area is effectively managed. - Furthermore, the sites are within the boundary of Soneva Jani resort, with an established management. The resort has submitted a letter of commitment along with the Expression of Interest (EOI) application, where the resort commits to implementing the management and monitoring plans for the area. OECMs status, should the area be recognized, will be evaluated once every 5 years, based on the annual monitoring reports submitted by the management.