International Atomic Energy Agency

IUREP N.F.S. No. 128
November 1977
Distr. LIMITED
Original: ENGLISH

INTERNATIONAL URANIUM RESOURCES EVALUATION PROJECT

I U R E P

NATIONAL FAVOURABILITY STUDIES

MALDIVES

77-11165

INTERNATIONAL URANIUM RESOURCES EVALUATION PROJECT

I U R E P

NATIONAL FAVOURABILITY STUDIES

IUREP N.F.S. no. 128

MALDIVES

C O N T E N T S

S U M M A R Y

Maldives, an archipelago consisting of between 1,000 and 2,000 islands and atolls in the Indian Ocean contain only 300 square kilometers and is populated by around 130,000 people who are engaged in raising of copra, fruits, taro, and other agricultural products, and in fishing. There is not now and never has been a mining industry except for quarrying of coral road metal.

Geologically the coral islands, based on present geological thinking is not a favourable host or source of uranium, and is therefore assigned a zero potential.

A. INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL GEOGRAPHY

The Maldive Islands are an archipelago in the Indian Ocean to the southwest of India and Ceylon. They extend from 7° 6' N to o° 42' S and from 72° 31' E to 73° 44' E and consist of about 2,000 low-lying coral islands, of which only about 220 are inhabited. The total land area is 300 square kilometers. The northernmost atoll is about 490 km southwest of Cape Comorin and 650 km from Sri Lanka.

The name Maldive is said to be derived from the two words mahal, meaning palace, and diva, meaning island.

The islands vary from tiny banks nearly awash to real islets. Ghang in the Haddummati atoll is five miles long. Some of the islands are constantly increasing in size; others are gradually washing away. Many contain fresh-water lagoons. Some atolls have encircling reefs, while others are made up of many small ring-shaped reefs, which dot the whole but may, at the circumference, tend to form a rim. The northern atoll reefs are less perfect than those in the south, never forming quiet lagoons in the center.

Climate

The climate is equatorial, moist, with a mean temperature of about 27° C. The December range is from 27° to 29° C and April from 27° to 32° C, with about 27° at night. The weather during the northeast monsoon is mild and pleasant but the southwest monsoon is violent and very rainy and the northern atolls are subject to more violent storms than those in the south.

Transportation

Only rudimentary roads exist in Maldives. The chief transportation being by sea, a number of powered vessels operate between Maldives and Sri Lanka at frequent intervals. Most are fairly small ranging from 800 to 3,000 tons.

An airport is under construction on the island of Hulule about a mile from Malé, the capital. Air Ceylon and Air India serve Maldives and there is also a local air line, Air Maldives.

Population

The population according to a 1974 census was 129,000. The capital, Male has 16,250.

The archipelago is divided into 17 administrative atolls. The Maldives have a parliament to which all islands elect members.

Industry, Mining and Rates of Exchange

The atolls are covered with coconut palms, and millets and tropical fruit and vegetables are grown. The principal industry is fishing: "Maldive fish" prepared from bonito and tuna are the main exports. There is also coir and lace making. Most of the trade is with Sri Lanka.

Agricultural products in 1975 consist of coconuts, 8,390 metric tons, Copra 1,426, Taro 1,000. Other roots and tubers 5,000 (FAO estimates); also papaya, screwpine, pomegranates, pineapples some citrus fruit, plantains, breadfruit, millet, sorghum, maize, onions, chillies and yams.

Fishing is 1974 netted 37,500 metric tons of mackerel, tuna, and other fish.

There is no mining industry in the Maldives.

The unit of currency is the Maldivian rupee. The exchange rate in December 1976 was US$ 1.00 = 8.85 Maldivian rupees.

B. GEOLOGY OF MALDIVES IN RELATION TO POTENTIALLY FAVOURABLE URANIUM BEARING AREAS

As stated above the Maldives are a series of tiny coral islands and atolls. This environment is not known to be favourable to uranium mineralization, although some mineralization has been reported on one other Pacific island which was considered only coral.

C. PAST EXPLORATION

There has been no known exploration for uranium in Maldives.

D. URANIUM OCCURRENCES AND RESOURCES

There are no known uranium resources in Maldives and no resources have ever been reported.

E. PRESENT STATUS OF EXPLORATION

There is no known exploration for uranium at any level in Maldives. If exploration, mentioned above, succeeds in locating uranium in what is considered a coral island, it may be locally expected that exploration will be carried out on a large number of the coral islands and atolls of the world.

F. POTENTIAL FOR NEW DISCOVERIES

On the basis of no knowledge of any rocks except coral in the Maldives archipelago, there is little reason to establish a uranium Potential in any category. The uranium potential is therefore estimated as zero.

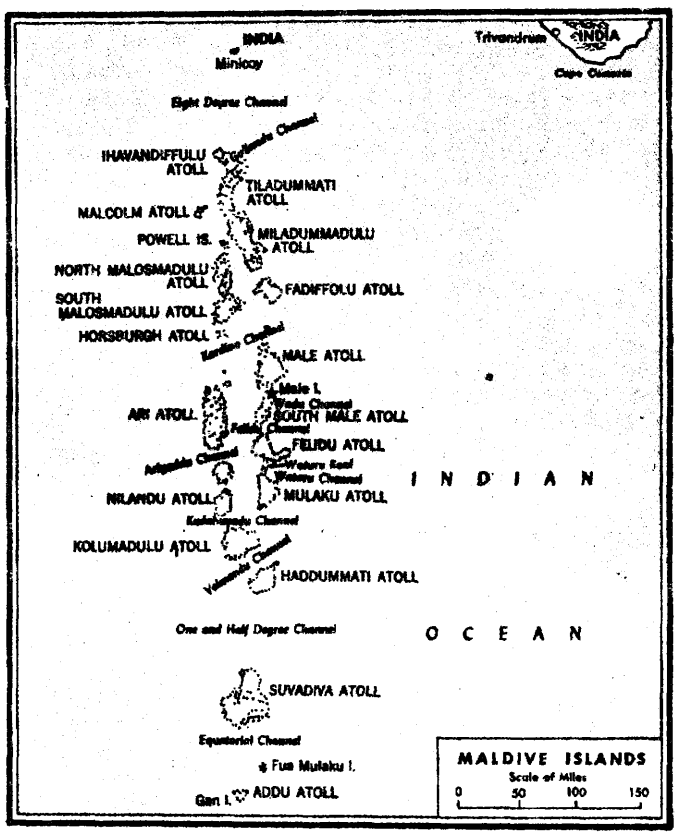
Compiled by M V Hansen
IAEA
Vienna
November 1977

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Europa Year Book 1977

Encyclopedia Britannica

Encyclopedia of Nations


INDIA
Minicoy
Trivandrum
INDIA
Cape Comorin
Eight Degree Channel
IHAVANDIFFULU ATOLL
TILADUMMATI ATOLL
MALCOLM ATOLL
POWELL IS.
MILADUMMADULU ATOLL
NORTH MALOSMADULU ATOLL
FADIFFOLU ATOLL
SOUTH MALOSMADULU ATOLL
HORSBURGH ATOLL
MALE ATOLL
Male I.
ARI ATOLL
SOUTH MALE ATOLL
FELIDU ATOLL
Watoru Reef
Watoru Channel
I N D I A N
NILANDU ATOLL
MULAKU ATOLL
KOLUMADULU ATOLL
HADDUMMATI ATOLL
One and Half Degree Channel
O C E A N
SUVADIVA ATOLL
Equatorial Channel
Fua Mulaku I.
Gan I.
ADDU ATOLL
MALDIVE ISLANDS
Scale of Miles
0
50
100
150