COMOROS

Ecosystem-based Adaptation

2017-2022

Supported by the
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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Increasing the average annual income of households in the project sites by 20%. At least 1,000 people will benefit from alternative and sustainable livelihoods.

Installing rainwater harvesting devices in 15 villages, benefitting a total of 38,300 people in a country where less than 13% of people have access to quality water supplies.

Sustainably managing 4,000 hectares of watersheds and restoring a further 3,500 hectares with defined no-take zones. 15 villages, containing a total of 38,300 people, are now carrying out a collaborative watershed management plan.

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PROJECT TITLE:

BUILDING CLIMATE RESILIENCE THROUGH REHABILITATED WATERSHEDS, FORESTS AND ADAPTIVE LIVELIHOODS

EXECUTING ENTITY:

Ministry of Energy, Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment, **Union of the Comoros**

KEY TARGETS:

38,000+

People benefitting from watershed restoration and reforestation.

1.4 million

Trees planted over the course of four years across all three islands.

7,500

Hectares of watersheds restored and sustainably managed.

FUNDING:

PROJECT PARTNERS:

National Directorate of Energy and Water Resources (DGEME); National Strategic Directorate of Agriculture and Livestock (DNSAE); National Research Institute on Agriculture, Fisheries and Environment (INRAPE); Village Development Associations; Mouvement de la jeunesse consciente des Comores; Association for Intervention for Development and the Environment; Action for Sustainable Development Environment (ADDE); University of the Comoros; Association Comoflora.

INTRODUCTION

- The Comoros archipelago is composed of four islands off the coast of east Africa, with a total population of around 800,000. Although a vital hotspot for biodiversity, it is one of the poorest countries in the world. Between 70-80% of Comorians are small-scale farmers dependent on rain-fed crops for subsistence.
- This project is helping the government to build climate resilience in 15 locations across three Comorian islands (5 in each). Families in these areas are facing severe water shortages due to increasingly erratic and reduced rainfall.
- The main approaches of the project are to restore and sustainably manage **7,500 ha of watersheds**; build **rainwater harvesting** devices; construct **anti-erosion structures** on farmland; and develop sustainable livelihoods to **diversify food and income** sources.
- The project is addressing the adaptation priorities identified in the NAPA, such as promoting drought-resilient crops and increasing water supplies.

TECHNOLOGIES & METHODS

- **Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA)** is central to the project's activities. EbA is the tactic of using nature and healthy ecosytems to reduce the impacts of climate change.
- The **reforestation activities** are using species based on their resilience and multi-purpose properties, like woodfuel production, fruit, and soil-health restoration. Over 1.4 million trees will be planted by the end of the project.
- The ecological restoration is **increasing water supplies** for local communities and reducing their vulnerability to extreme weather events.
- **Climate-resilient and alternative livelihoods** are being adopted across the three Comorian islands, such as agroforestry and the sale of sustainable pharmaco-cosmetic products.
- A key objective is to establish community-conservation areas with **defined no-take zones.** These efforts are protecting vital ecosystem services, be it firewood or flood protection.
- Five villages on each of the three islands are now carrying out a **collaborative watershed rehabilitation plan**. 150 people in total are receiving training in integrated watershed management (IWM).
- **Anti-erosive and anti-flooding structures** are being built, including stone dykes, small retaining walls, and anti-fire corridors.
- To improve water availability, 15 **rainwater harvesting structures** are currently under construction, one in each project site.

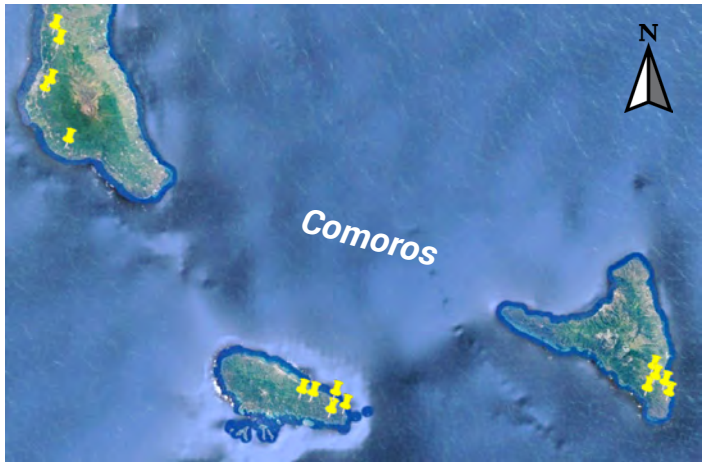
CLIMATE IMPACTS

- The Comoros will be deeply affected by climate change, and rainfall patterns are predicted to become highly unpredictable. Sea-levels will rise along with the temperatures, threatening coastal aquifers with saltwater intrusion.
- Currently, less than 13% of the population have access to good quality water supplies, and water consumption per capita is only 35 litres per day (WHO's minimum requirement is 50 litres).
- By 2090, the dry season could experience 47% less rainfall than today. Extreme weather events are expected to be more frequent and intense, including tropical cyclones, droughts and flooding.
- The danger is compounded by poverty and unsustainable extraction in the forests, which depletes the soil's ability to retain water. Between 1990 and 2000, forest cover shrunk 3% per year.

"I learned that we really didn't know how to protect our land – we were killing it. Now we know we can plant things to stop erosion and we can tell others about how trees protect the soil."

- Faharddine Soumaila, 33, a farmer at the project site.

PROJECT LOCATION



The project interventions are taking place in 15 sites across three Comorian islands. The regions involved are: Bambao, Hambou, and Itsandra Regions in Grande Comore Island; Mremani Region in Anjouan Island; and Diando Region in Moheli Island.

VIDEOS & STORIES

Video:

https://youtu.be/sK5VfDEWEew

Human impact stories:

English:
https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/where-there-used-be-so-much-there-so-little-challenge-climate-change-comoros

https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/when-rain-comes-fighting-climate-change-forecasting-comoros

French:
https://www.unenvironment.org/fr/news-and-stories/recit/la-ou-les-pluies-etaient-si-abondantes-elles-sont-desormais-si-faibles-le

https://www.unenvironment.org/fr/news-and-stories/recit/les-pluies-arrivent-lutter-contre-les-changements-climatiques-grace-aux

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