



Submission for the First Africa Regional Consultation on Nature-Based Solutions
Children and Youth Major Group
July 2023

Children and Youth Major Group submission to the intergovernmental consultation following up on the UNEA Resolution 5/5 (UNEP/EA.5/Res.5) on Nature-based Solutions in reply to the co-chairs' invitation *to provide input in relation to the overall aim of the intergovernmental consultations and the three specific tasks for the consultations specified in the resolution.* CYMG presents its contributions to the following points:

1. The overall aim of the intergovernmental consultations
2. Examples of best practices

The overall aim of the intergovernmental consultations

Children and Youth Major Group is pleased to take part in the consultations happening for this region, as a way to share the vision of the global youth on what we can do to contribute to the implementation of nature-based solutions in solving/mitigating the effects of the climate change in the natural world and human societies. We share the vision that young people should also be considered when thinking about nature-based solutions since we can contribute to the discussion around the topic by sharing our novel ideas and the projects that young people have done.

We at CYMG believe that nature-based solutions can be a great tool in achieving some of the Sustainable Development Goals, but that would only work if there is cooperation (whether multilateral or bilateral) between Member States and other Stakeholders. We also stand for our common philosophy that nature-based solutions should be implemented taking into account the welfare of the communities most affected by the triple planetary crisis, in order to best benefit them.

This is a compilation list of projects that utilize nature-based solutions as way to combat the consequences of the climate crisis, and for this submission, we compiled two examples from the African region. For each one, we have written a summary of their goals and development process as well as their outcomes and sources of finance.



Examples of best practices

Africa

Kenya

Community-led mangrove forest restoration and seaweed farming in the Southern coastal region of Kwale County, restoring lost and fragile mangrove forests to protect ecosystems, livelihoods, and people. Seaweed farming with a high level of female participation is also providing an additional source of income.

Nature-based Intervention:

- Four communities managing about seventeen hectares of land in the southern coastal region of Kwale County, Kenya are responding to the challenge of climate change induced perturbations to rainfall patterns, increased intensity and frequency of storm surges and heatwaves by restoring and replanting weakened or destroyed mangrove forests. Community-based groups with equal representation of women and men are actively growing and managing mangrove seedlings with 243,000 planted to date. As the coastal mangrove forests are restored, communities have also started seaweed farming, a non-invasive, non-polluting activity that can provide an extra source of income. These combined efforts are helping households counter the economic and health stresses and shocks caused by reported declines in fish productivity.

Overview of context and outcomes:

- Mangrove forests provide protection from coastal flooding, coastal erosion, and storm surges while simultaneously providing and sheltering the habitats of a wealth of native species in both coastal and inland areas.

Climate change mitigation:

- Even though the effectiveness of this project on carbon sequestration and storage has yet to be quantified or reported, mangrove, seaweed, and tree planting in this area is likely to contribute to the carbon sequestration potential of the area.

Adaptation:

- Both mangrove forest restoration and seaweed farming will likely provide better protection from flooding, storm surges, and coastal erosion. Furthermore, seaweed farming as well as increased biodiversity from mangrove restoration have reportedly boosted the incomes and economic security of participating communities that face various pressures to their fish stocks.



Ecosystem health:

- The restoration and replanting efforts have reportedly led to a significant increase in trees grown and managed with an observed 80% survival rate of seedlings planted. 137,000 seedlings were planted during the two-year course of the project, with planting continuing even after the project's formal close. Furthermore, nearly 8,000 fruit, native, and charcoal replacement tree seedlings have been planted.

Socioeconomic outcomes:

- The project placed a strong emphasis on gender-balanced participation, with all community groups boasting 50% female engagement in seedling planting, both in inland and coastal sites. According to pre-project assessments, communities expressed a strong interest in diversified, sustainable income streams at the start of the project and the introduction of seaweed farming has reportedly provided an alternative livelihood option. At the time of the project's formal close, 91 seaweed farms were active, reportedly producing between 10.73 and 20.3 tonnes of seaweed per year, mainly harvested by women at an average net profit of KSh 13,867 (about 90 £GBP) per farm. Because the crop cycles of the seaweed planted are relatively short, communities have reported being able to harvest several times a year at a very low cost with an average net profit per cycle of KSh 2,000 (13 £GBP). As a result of this additional income stream, women in the communities reported higher investment in school fees, healthcare expenses, water and sanitation improvements, and housing.

Finance:

- This project was funded by Plan International with further support provided by the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute and the Kenya Forest Service.

Morocco

Aiming to serve as an example of more participatory ecological restoration in semiarid areas of North Africa, this initiative in the Béni Boufrah area involved scientists, managers, and local stakeholders in every part of a project aiming to restore an area of *Tetraclinis articulata* forest in Morocco.

Nature-based Intervention:

- A group of researchers launched a Participatory Ecological Restoration project in the Béni Boufrah Forests. The approach was based on knowledge sharing, trust, and active stakeholder participation with scientists, managers, and local stakeholders involved in and guiding every step of the process from planning to outcome monitoring. This participatory process was applied to all steps of the restoration initiative including the identification of restoration priorities, assessment of land-use options, definition of the



restoration procedure, participatory plantation, evaluation, surveillance, and monitoring. Specifically, the restoration efforts were conducted on a one-hectare area of land where 250 plants were planted by 90 participants (57 men and 33 women). The area is primarily *Tetraclinis articulata* forest. As such, a stakeholder workshop concluded that the planting of *Tetraclinis* and other similar wood species would be most appropriate.

Overview of context and outcomes:

- Semiarid regions of North Africa face frequent challenges of land degradation resulting from both human- and climate change-induced pressures. Simultaneously, efforts to achieve the ecological restoration of previously degraded land have had minimal success as they are often conducted in an often non-participatory and top-down manner.

Adaptation:

- Community members reported a wide range of ecosystem services provided by the restored forest area, including services linked to the most critical local problems of erosion and flooding.

Ecosystem health:

- Fourteen out of fifteen total survey respondents reported the integrity of the restored plot and recovery of native vegetation as the most relevant indicators of success. Recent monitoring has shown an increase in the cover and composition of spontaneous vegetation. The seedling survival rate 18 months after planting was 60% for *Tetraclinis* and 90% for *Pistacia*.

Socioeconomic outcomes:

- A post-intervention report emphasized that the signature of an agreement between stakeholder groups was reported to represent their will to overcome disagreements, to trust each other, and to work together for the purpose of conserving and restoring local natural resources. The active involvement of women was reportedly sought throughout each step of the project, although many women faced restrictions as a result of their responsibility for housework and family care.

Finance:

- The project is funded by the University of Abdelmalek Esaàdi in Morocco and the University of Alicante in Spain.