

Voluntary commitments to disaster risk reduction

Commitment 1: Building capacities of civil society to drive inclusive ecosystem-based risk management by influencing policy, practice and investments

Goal 1 - Risk prevention: the adoption of risk-informed development pathways that minimize the generation of new disaster risks

Scope: Global

Country(ies)/territory(ies): Sahel region, East Africa, South-and southeast Asia (India, Indonesia, Philippines) Central America

Description:

Civil society organisations play a key role in facilitating stakeholders, including government actors and local communities in dialogues and planning processes around risk reduction. They are therefore well positioned to drive innovation, including by promoting risk approaches that implement ecosystem-based responses as an integral part of broader risk management.

Unfortunately many local CSO's struggle to effectively engage in policy processes. They seek to attain the skills to effectively support development of policies and legislative frameworks in different political contexts and facilitate a connection with practice on the ground. Wetlands International will help CSOs in vulnerable areas across the world to set up such dialogues and provide strategic guidance throughout the process. Supporting these dialogues we will organize trainings on ecosystem-based risk reduction, support development of organizational advocacy strategies and facilitate development of regional civil society networks on ecosystem-based risk reduction.

We will do this as part of the **Partners for Resilience**, an alliance of Netherlands Red Cross, Cordaid, CARE Netherlands, Red Cross Climate Centre and Wetlands International which was

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established in 2010 to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable people whose livelihoods are affected by hazards and disasters in the global South.

Targets

For the period 2016 – 2020 Wetlands International, together with Partners for Resilience will invest 50 million euro to invest in capacity building of civil society organisations with focus on lobby and advocacy to bring about changes in policy, investments and practice. We will strengthen CSOs at local, national, and regional/global level by building capacities to argue for ecosystem-based risk management in their respective socio-economic and political context:

1. Policy: policies include ecosystem-based approaches in risk management and address root causes to risk that result from ill-informed sectoral developments.
2. Practice: field-based programs that integrate ecosystem-based, humanitarian and engineered risk management solutions
3. Investments: increased investments in ecosystem-based risk management and inclusion of safeguards towards sustainable risk reduction practice. This involves both finance for risk reduction and broader sectoral investments.

Indicators & means of verification:

of dialogues initiated, # of CSO platforms established, # of people reached through trainings
of policies changed, # of funding influenced

Timeframe:

2016 – 2020

Commitment 2: Safeguarding and restoring wetlands to reduce water related risks

Goal 1 - Risk prevention: the adoption of risk-informed development pathways that minimize the generation of new disaster risks

Scope: Global

Country(ies)/territory(ies): Niger basin, Senegal basin, Kenya; Tanzania; West African coastline
Malaysia; Indonesia; India; Central America (Pacific Coast)

Description

More than 90% of all extreme events are water related. Their frequency and intensity is rising: more and more people experience water scarcity and suffer the impacts of major floods, droughts, storms and water-related diseases. Much of this increase in vulnerability is the result of the degradation of wetlands, such as floodplains, mangroves and peatlands and loss of their capacity to regulate water flows, protect coastlines and provide fish and other resources.

By understanding how such losses inflict disaster risk across the landscape, integral risk management solutions can be defined that sustain and bring back wetland values. Research has shown that such inclusive solutions are typically highly adaptive, a 'no-regret option and more cost-effective compared to conventional single-sided' solutions.

Targets:

1. Conserve high-value more or less intact wetland environments for their full range of values. We do so through a site-based conservation planning approach, as well as by addressing threats that emerge elsewhere along the coast or upstream.
2. Restore degraded and heavily modified landscapes, by restoring wetlands and their values, thus reducing disaster risk and optimizing production systems that sustainably benefit from wetland services.

Indicators:

of ha under improved management, # of ha restored, % decline in disaster incidence and related damages

Timeframe:

2015 - 2025

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Commitment 3: Upscaling Building with Nature approach in Indonesia through a public-private partnership

Goal 2 – Risk reduction: actions to address and reduce pre-existing disaster risk

Scope: Indonesia

Country(ies)/territory(ies): Indonesia, options for replication elsewhere

Description

Wetlands International sees a clear need for increased investment in risk reduction solutions that achieve optimal resilience by integrating ecosystem-based approaches in engineered designs for coastal zone and flood risk management. These approaches, known as **Building with Nature**, make use of the protective values of ecosystems (oyster reefs, salt marshes, floodplains etc.) and the dynamics of nature (natural currents that bring in sediment) to add to the protection provided by infrastructure such as dams and dykes: from fighting nature, to working with and alongside nature. Building with Nature approaches are known to be often more cost-effective, while bringing substantial co-benefits through the revival of ecosystem services, including improved fisheries, recreational values and carbon storage.

In the years to come, we will develop our understanding on coastal ecosystem services provision, identify options to integrate ecosystems in engineered designs and demonstrate innovative management approaches for coastal ecosystems. We aim to leverage investment into Building with Nature solutions on the basis of detailed business-cases that also consider indirect benefits derived from healthy ecosystems.

A main focus will be on securing vulnerable mangrove coastlines in Indonesia. In this country, more than thirty million people suffer from coastal flooding and erosion hazards, affecting 3,000 villages in Northern Java alone. The problems largely result from the removal of mangrove belts for aquaculture development, unsustainable coastal infrastructures, and groundwater extraction. In some places more than 3 km of land has already been taken by the sea and entire villages have been

engulfed. Many people experience a major loss in income, reaching up to 60-80% in some villages. The agri- and aquaculture sectors, key economic engines in Indonesia, also suffer multi-billion losses.

Following a successful pilot in the Demak Region, Central Java, Wetlands International and partners just launched a comprehensive five-year multi million Building with Nature initiative to enhance coastal safety in rural and urban areas at the North Coast of Java. The project aims to build stable coastlines with reduced erosion risk through a unique integration of mangrove restoration, small scale engineering measures and sustainable land use. The five-year programme will focus on the most affected coastline in Demak.

The initiative will be guided and implemented by a multi stakeholder partnership the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), the Secretary of Central Java Province, the Ministry of Public Works and Human Housing (PU) and the Dutch Ecoshape Consortium, coordinated by Wetlands International. The programme will include close interaction and technical exchange with large scale coastal defence programmes of these Ministries along the north coast of Java and elsewhere in Indonesia. The overall aim is to inspire coastal zone managers of government and the private sector to scale up and replicate the approach in Indonesia and worldwide and to embed the approach in local and regional policies and planning.

Target:

Implement Building with Nature in Indonesia to restore severely eroded coasts of Central Java and inform coastal defence approaches elsewhere in Indonesia and the region.

Indicators and means of verification:

hectares of land under sustainable use;
% increase from coastal production systems;
% decrease in disaster incidence and damages

Timeframe:

2015 - 2020

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