Community-based ecological coastal rehabilitation using an Ecosystem approach in Seychelles

7th WIOSAP PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE
DARES SALAAM, TANZANIA
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Terrestrial Restoration Action Society of Seychelles (TRASS)

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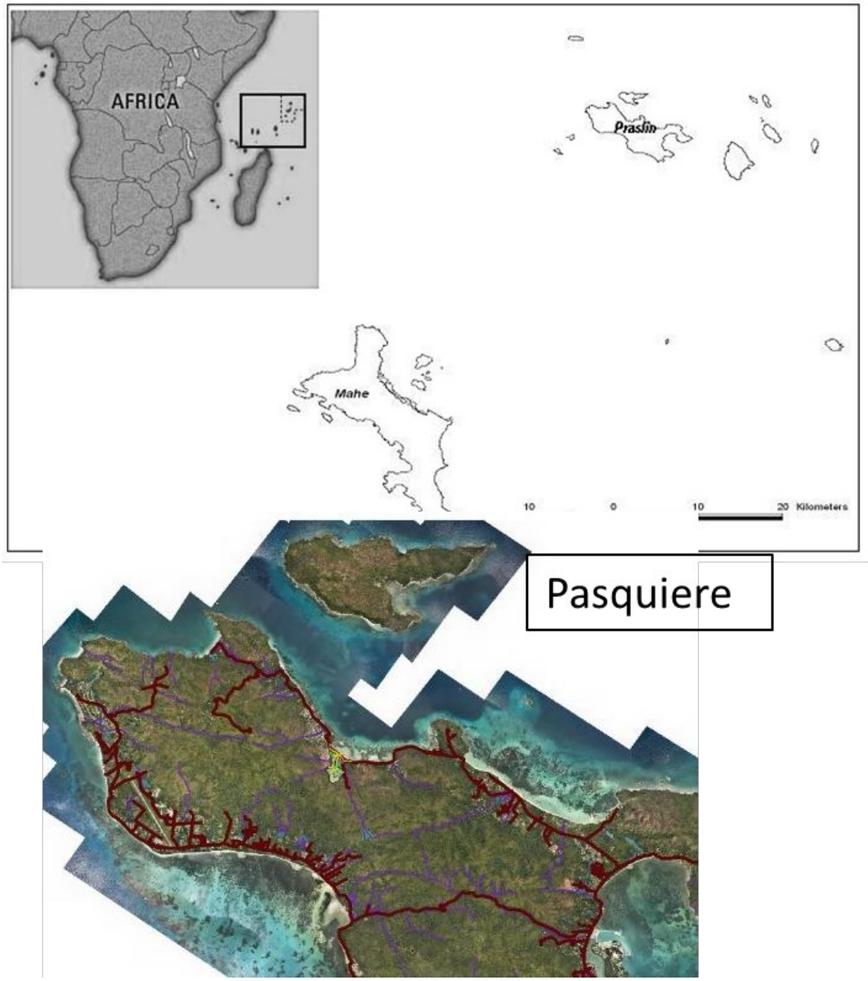
Why the Project

Objective:

Rehabilitation of fragmented wetlands and associated foothills as a tool to reduce the impacts from land-based stresses onto critical habitats downstream.

Where: Seychelles, Praslin Island



Partners:

- Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Climate Change (MACCE) - Facilitator
- Seychelles Parks and Gardens Authority (SPGA) - Planting
- Raffles hotel – Site preparation & planting
- Seychelles Employment Transition Scheme (SETS) - Site preparation & planting
- Praslin EBA Watershed Committee - Planting
- Praslin schools &Wildlife club of Seychelles – Planting & Awareness raising
- Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT) – Co-funding
- GOS-GEF-UNDP Ridge to Reef Project - Co-funding

Key Achievements

- Rehabilitation of 3 ha wetland and associated habitats
- Rehabilitation of 2 ha degraded hill
- One anti-erosion barrier technique tested on steep slopes with great success
- Availability of baseline environmental data (marine, wetland, coastal forests, fauna, flora) for long-term monitoring
- Successful propagation of over 2,000 plants and replanting on sites

Key Achievements

- A dozen community engagement activities
- 1 article in international press, 1 article + 2 interviews in local press, several Facebook posts
- Trainings on habitat rehabilitation techniques and monitoring – 12 students from University of Seychelles, 24 staff from the Seychelles Enterprise Transition Scheme, 10 Raffles staff, 12 TRASS staff & members
- Successful involvement of Praslin schools into TRASS Conservation Education & Awareness programme
- Using the WIOSAP demo project to leverage funds from other donors (GOS-UNDP-GEF Ridge to Reef, SADC GCCA+, Global Fund for Coral Reef/SeyCCAT project).

Key Lessons Learnt

- The link between degradation of hillsides and degradation of wetlands has unfortunately been overlooked. Soil eroded from exposed bare hills accumulates into the wetland transforming it to a non-wetland habitat where invasive species etc degrade the habitats. The lesson is the need to integrate a ridge to reef or landscape approach in restoration programmes.
- Maintenance of restored sites (during & post-project) needs to be a core component of any restoration programme.
- The palm leaf anti-erosion barrier is a cost-effective method against erosion on steep slopes and needs to be implemented prior to planting to stabilize the soil.
- Further develop and integrate cost-effective indigenous practices such as the palm leaf anti-erosion barriers in restoration programmes.
- An important strategy and element of success for ecosystem restoration is the empowerment and the commitment by the communities to environmental restoration. The people need to be at the centre of change and hence involving communities in the restoration processes have been very effective and needs to be further enhanced.
- Continuous, life-long education and awareness activities that engage communities in interactive ways are needed.




Project Sustainability

- ***Synergies an integration onto existing plans/strategies/initiatives*** **–** e.g. the GOS-UNDP-GEF Ridge to Reef project - maintenance of the restored site at Pasquière especially through its watershed management plan (2023-2028, which absorbed the Pasquière rehabilitation and management plan.
- SADC Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI) - developing a National Action Plan for Seychelles. The plan ensures that civil society is part of implementing the GGWI–SADC programme and to be part of the concrete actions that implement the strategy to the benefit of the environment and the people of the SADC region.
- ***Carbon-offsetting programmes*** with tourism establishments where visitors and locals, plant trees to compensate their carbon footprint 'Holiday with a difference initiative'.
- ***The Voluntary programme*** whereby community members engaged in the implementation from the onset of the project and who would have been trained will voluntarily continue specific project activities.
- ***Internal source of funding -*** TRASS will explore internal sources of funding such as revenue-creating activities through plant production and composting.
- ***External source of funding -*** TRASS will seek further funding opportunities both locally and internationally through grants e.g. the Global Environment Fund, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, the Environment Trust Fund .




Thank you!

TRASS
Striving for greener tropical islands