2022 United Nations Ocean Conference Side Event V18

A Perspective to Reduce Climate Change Impacts Through Restoration and NbS in Marine-coastal Ecosystems, a Review of Case Studies.

June 30, 2022
6:00 - 9:00 PM (WEST) Lisbon, Portugal
12:00 - 3:00 PM (CDMX) Mexico City, Mexico

Organized by: Fundación Mexicana para el Océano A.C.; The Ocean Foundation; United Nations Environment Programme- Latin America and Caribbean ; UN Environment -Caribbean Environment Program; Instituto Nacional de Ecología y Cambio Climático (INECC); Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (SEMARNAT); WRI Mexico; CINVESTAV – Laboratorio de Producción Primaria and UNAM ENES

Background on the event : Discuss the activities carried out to implement NbS solutions from a regional perspective and at the national level in Mexico. Including the maintenance and restoration of mangrove ecosystems, learning about collecting consistent quantitative and qualitative data on the effectiveness of NbS, and sharing experiences of how mangroves, coral reefs, and seagrasses provide important ecosystem services for climate change adaptation and mitigation. Invited by Fundación Mexicana para el Oceáno AC, our partners UNEP LAC, CEP, TOF, The Mexican Carbon Program, UNAM ENES, CINVESTAV, WRI Mexico and the Mexican government, represented by SEMARNAT and INECC discussed the main challenges to implementing blue carbon ecosystem restoration as a nature-based solution proven to recover ecosystem services and associated livelihoods.

Key Issues **discussed (5- 8 bullet points)**

- Presentation of the "Regional Strategy and Action Plan (RSAP) for the Valuation, Protection and/or Restoration of Key Marine Habitats in the Wider Caribbean Report."
- A 4-part scorecard was developed which starts at the country level and narrows its focus down to specific large-scale habitat restoration sites. Through this process, a total of 19 scorecards for 16 countries were produced in the WCR region. A total of 48 unique large-scale habitat restoration sites were identified through this process.
- **Presentation of a Manual of Ecological Restoration of Mangroves in the Mesoamerican Reef System and the Wider Caribbean**: This manual contributes to strengthening local, national, and regional capacities for the ecological restoration of mangroves and the ecosystem services they provide in the MAR and the Wider Caribbean region. The manual is based on the foundation of restoration ecology and ecological restoration principles of the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER, http://www.ser.org/).
- Link to the documents: SPANISH: https://marfund.org/es/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Manual-Restauracion-de-Manglar.pdf

ENGLISH: https://marfund.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Manual-for-Mangrove-restoration.pdf

- **Presentation of Mexican Government Tools to Monitor EbA and Climate Change Vulnerability Reduction: Coastal Ecosystem-Based Adaptation in the Gulf of Mexico, Tuxpan and Celestún.** A look at the NDC implementation of the Mexican Government was presented The "adaptation based on coastal ecosystems" project covered the lower basin of the municipality of Tuxpan, Veracruz and Celestún, Yucatán. Where successful activities in the country were mapped; A methodology was developed to build the blue carbon baseline and a guide with recommendations to scale up and replicate successful restoration initiatives in mangrove ecosystems. *Link to the report:*
  http://189.240.101.244:8080/xmlui/handle/publicaciones/353
- The lack of consistent quantitative and qualitative data on the effectiveness of NbS and the extent of its national implementation may be some of the barriers to its implementation. This event offered critical and recent perspectives about impacts of socioecological restoration as a nature-based solution with big potential to be implemented in the coastal-marine areas of Mexico.

Key recommendations for action (5 - 6 bullet points)

- Mangroves are an important ecosystem to people because they help stabilize the coastline ecosystem and prevent erosion, providing natural infrastructure and protection to nearby populated areas by preventing erosion and absorbing storm surge impacts during extreme weather events such as hurricanes.
- Mexican mangroves are exposed to economically and socially illogical destruction. In Mexico, efforts from different sectors are already growing to focus on protecting some of the world's remaining mangroves. Indeed, the losses are such, and the opportunities sufficiently great, for mangrove restoration to be seen as a critical component of both conservation and shrewd coastal management.
- This list of high-priority sites that were scored in the report guides TOF's focus as they work to develop replicable models for investment plans that utilize a blended finance approach to habitat restoration and conservation and pollution prevention. By mapping beneficiaries, including private, social, and public, they can link blended finance, economic valuation of ecosystem services, and broader socio-economic and cultural benefits. This allows the integration of public, private, and philanthropic capital, not only to support the design and implementation of restoration projects, but also the long-term monitoring needed to measure success.
- As a regional community, we all recognize the urgency of addressing climate change while promoting sustainable economic development. With this methodology, the collaborative effort will help pave the way for strategic action expected to help the WCR rally private investors, non-profit organizations, and government actors to restore and protect coastal ecosystems, as well as reduce pollution stressors, that increase our climate resilience – this will enable the promotion of sustainable blue economy approaches.