WWF NbS for Adaptation Conference

MALINDI KENYA, 30 OCT, 2023

WWF delegates from Southern, Eastern and Central Africa, Europe and Asia met with stakeholders and partners in Malindi, Kenya for the NbS for Adaptation Conference on; Leveraging Nature-based Solutions (NbS) at Scale in Africa through policy frameworks and partnerships. The one day conference, convened by the Africa Adaptation Hub with WWF Finland, WWF Denmark and WWF-Kenya, explored NbS’s transformative potential in Africa.

The conference aimed to improve the understanding of the enabling conditions (barriers and opportunities) for NbS implementation in policy frameworks and improve coordination and foster collaboration across NbS related initiatives in Africa. It also highlighted the urgent need for collaborative efforts that harness the power of nature for the benefit of all.

In Africa, there is an opportunity for governments and organizations to proactively incorporate NbS principles into their policies. This integration into national and global policy frameworks signifies a significant step towards a more harmonious relationship between human societies and the natural world.

KEY REFLECTIONS OF GROUP DISCUSSIONS:

1. NbS is integrated into several global and national policy frameworks, although barriers such as weak institutional frameworks, conflicting policies and lack of government capacity on NbS are a challenge.
2. NbS alone will not solve all challenges and might require supporting interventions. Consider enabling conditions for NbS in project design thinking and implementation.
3. NbS is holistic and there is a need to work in partnerships and collaborate with partners in order to tap into the different expertise e.g. IFRC and WWF partnership on NbS for adaptation and DRR.
4. NbS address multiple challenges relevant for humanitarian context: CCA, DRR, food and water security, livelihoods, health etc.
5. Integration and collaboration at regional level is the key to get more impactful actions on NbS.
The conference day included a number of condensed TED Talk style talks from keynote speakers, on key topics including: the UNEA consultations on NbS and perspectives for NbS within global policy; NbS in Danish development priorities; WWF’s global and regional advocacy work on NbS; Working with Nature to protect people through NbS and Disaster Risk Reduction (WWF/IFRC partnership); ILO - partnership opportunities (Green works and Nature-based Solutions, learning etc.) ; Danish Strategic Sector Cooperation (SSC) Initiative and partnerships in Africa. This was followed by two tracks of thematic breakout sessions where participants discussed and proposed concrete suggestions for collaboration, strategies and ways forward.

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Melissa de Kock - Head of the Biodiversity, People and Landscapes Unit at UN Environment.

“We have a common interest in pushing the NbS agenda and WWF is doing a fantastic job. A good basis has been established for stronger collaboration moving forward. In parallel, we need to inspire our governments by bringing at their table, the evidence to support the implementation of NbS at scale in Africa.”
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“We noticed that there is a lot of passion and interest from WWF on implementing NbS on the ground. Rich ambition for partnership and the Danish Red Cross is interested to cultivate that going forward.”
Dorothy Nkonge - Country Manager for the Danish Red Cross in Kenya.

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“Out of the deliberations we have had over the past week - we should be able to contribute to the knowledge of NbS and continually be able to improve to take NbS to the next level.”
Jackson Kiplagat - WWF Kenya, Head of Conservation.

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