

Policy Recommendations for Climate Resilience in the Mediterranean

DEMO 3

📍 Italy

Decarbonization of agricultural practices and combating agricultural pollution in Sardinia, Italy



What are Traps?

From our analysis across all the case studies, we identified four patterns of interconnected barriers to nature-based solutions mainstreaming that are recognized in all case studies.

How can we Overcome or Steer clear from traps?

Identified good practices in the making that explicate how to overcome the different traps.

TRAP 01

Weak(ening) Evidence

Represents how risk aversion of regional and local governments' practice is reinforced by limited epistemological inclusivity, and a weak evidence basis for drawing climate policy and planning measures that results in slow or stalled policy implementation.

- Identify, invite and collaborate with intermediary actors of the region (for example within "Il Contratto di Laguna del Calich") to ensure inclusive participation and a co-creation of a narrative of mission for climate resilience with Nature-based Solutions.
- Leverage funding from other areas for NbS, including resources for water quality of the Porto Conte marine protected area, and update procurement processes at a local, municipal and regional level to include specific criteria for NbS included in tendering processes and contracts.
- Actively engage with the local universities to research, develop and provide local data and analysis of projects and their dynamics and impacts on the region, and to provide new perspectives.

TRAP 02

Community as a challenge

Refers to the situation where there is an avoidance of public officers engaging with communities and citizens that reinforces a lack of participatory planning and preference for consultations, which fuels distrust of public institutions from local communities and a transactional attitude toward engagement and participation from the communities.

- Translate findings and learnings from the NbS demo into technical guidelines and institutional settings as a best practice approach (such as wastewater recycling), and protect recipient water bodies from discharges that could contribute to eutrophication. The findings can also include monitoring and evaluation of ecosystem services to further support ecological restoration.
- Build on the strong institutional collaboration to establish a forum for community engagement with public authorities, inspired by the "Consulta Comunale del Verde" at the municipality of Catania (Demo 4). This forum exists outside of project-based engagement, but invites communities to provide inputs to environmental debates.
- Leverage the strong partnerships and collaborations between private sector, public sector and academic communities to share out NbS project lessons and experiences to different community groups beyond technical experts and stakeholders, at a variety of levels- from local to international.



TRAP 03

Excluding Narratives of Climate Change and Nature-based Solutions

Refers to the ways Nature-based Solutions have been advocated and/or communicated alongside climate change action create excluding narratives, with technocratic language/terms that disengages community and blocks buy-in.

- Explore opportunities for knowledge transfer beyond the region and within the CARDIMED consortium of “Il Contratto di Laguna del Calich”, using the experiences and lessons learned as strong examples of building multidisciplinary, transboundary collaboration forums which support the protection of ecosystems, but also build strong relationships amongst regional actors.
- Explore ways to keep and expand local knowledge within the area through communities of practice.
- Continue to expand outreach and involvement of the local community in an inclusive manner, tailored to the diversity of communities of all ages, abilities and backgrounds; for example through bringing the elderly into schools to talk to children about connections to nature and landscape over the years, and to raise awareness about climate change.

TRAP 04

Ambivalence in place - Nature-based Solutions as simultaneously soft and hard solutions

This trap captures the portraying of Nature-based Solutions as “soft” (desirable and easy to advocate for) and “hard” (technocratic and difficult to communicate about) simultaneously that creates a stalemate in how they are translated across urban agendas especially those on urban regeneration/planning.

- Enhance visibility of NbS projects through the region, metropolitan and local areas by undertaking site visits with the community, local students, or by promoting technical training sessions to build capacity on NbS project delivery with the teams responsible for this including public works, environment, urban design and landscape architecture professionals.
- Support awareness of NbS projects beyond a technical audience by adding information, panels, QR codes, or urban placemaking initiatives (ranging from installations to events), to celebrate the importance of NbS in linking to the water quality in swimming areas at the Porto Conte.

How can Sardinia be a catalyst for climate change adaptation and resilience?



Sardinia’s tenacity in developing strong voluntary partnerships in order to protect and care for ecosystems in the region is a testament to its strength in operating within and beyond governance frameworks. The project acts as an intermediary that catalyses collaborations. The innovative nature of the project itself provides valuable insights into the potential of improving water quality and using recycled water in agriculture.

The operation of the project as a circular system (aquaculture system used to assess water quality from the wetland) could also be employed as an economic resource in the region. The experiences of Sardinia can additionally lead to the development of mechanisms to support the evaluation of water quality, which will allow for broader upscaling, aiding in addressing regional water scarcity.

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