

Policy Recommendations for Climate Resilience in the Mediterranean

DEMO 6

📍 Spain

Forest management and heatwave resilience in Aragón, Spain



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.

- Ensure that NbS work is captured as a responsibility (through the titular de competencias) within key departments at a regional and local level. Involving these stakeholders can support local authorities to implement NbS projects.
- Establish a dedicated budget category within institutions and update procurement processes at a local, municipal and regional level to include specific criteria for NbS in tendering processes and contracts, with a clear funding pathway.
- Link NbS projects to existing policy and budgetary categories that are already allocated, until a dedicated funding pathway is established.

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.

- Undertake workshops with community members and local organisations, to develop new skills.
- Incentivise NbS projects on private land, regardless of the political direction at the time to enhance the coverage and distribution of benefits.
- Lead training workshops with technical staff at a regional and local level on innovative community engagement approaches and methods (such as the IAP2), particularly within the CARDIMED network, to promote participation.



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 the “Patio’s por el Clima” programme
- Build upon the experiences from knowledge transfer to generate examples of NbS best practice in educational settings with the aim to improve thermal comfort.
- Expand outreach in an inclusive manner, tailored to the diversity of communities of all ages, abilities and backgrounds; for example by bringing the elderly into schools to talk to children about connections to nature and the landscape over the years.
- Encourage storytelling and knowledge sharing, documenting the connections to place, nature and the land in Aragon by hosting picnics and urban events, as well as by promoting activities in which stories are recorded and shared.

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.

- Undertake site visits and 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 promoting urban walking and bike tours that feature NbS.
- Plan events in spaces with NbS to support the active use of the sites, while exploring opportunities for placemaking.

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



Aragon has experienced great shifts in the regional government, making for a challenging context in which to navigate the climatic vulnerabilities of the region. There are legacies of previous regional governments in policy which greatly support the development of eco-literacy, environmental awareness and education (EÁREA-Estrategia Aragonesa de Educación Ambiental), which serves as a powerful resource for raising awareness of climatic challenges. While political shifts make continued innovation challenging, Aragon can lean on the existing policies to explore ways of embedding NbS that can support the achievement of regional government goals. Aragon is an area with strong potential for collaboration with DEMO4- Sicily, which often employs similar approaches.

Aragon is a region that inspires and demonstrates how NbS projects can be holistically embedded within society by incorporating educational and awareness-raising activities, selecting sites to increase visibility and aligning with strong regional climate policies.

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