

ECOLOGY AS A PRECONDITION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The many biodiversity-rich landscapes of Madagascar are home to numerous endemic and critically endangered species. These same landscapes also provide the population with essential ecosystem services. As the demand for land and natural resources grows, crucial ecosystem services are coming under pressure. IUCN NL provides insight into the effects of various development scenarios at landscape level. In this way, we are contributing to social awareness about the close relationship between ecology and economy.

CURRENT LAND USE IS PREVENTING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

As is the case in many countries, in Madagascar too, numerous parties are failing to comply with the legislation and regulations aimed at protecting the natural environment. The production of charcoal, illegal logging and destructive slash and burn agriculture are seriously harming the biological diversity of the island.

To date, the national and regional governments have been unable to effectively enforce nature and environment legislation. As a result, ecosystem services are at risk of rapidly disappearing, despite the fact that 90 percent of the population of Madagascar are directly dependent on primary resources from agriculture, fishery and forestry.

THREAT OF FUTURE LARGE-SCALE MINING

In addition to the already widely present and very destructive artisanal and small-scale mining, industrial mining looks very likely at numerous locations, in the medium term. The development

of a mining industry and its related infrastructure, if not well guided, represents an additional threat for example to the water supply. It is therefore essential to be thoroughly prepared for these future developments, to guarantee that both now and in the long term they have a positive impact on the whole of Malagasy society.

EMBEDDING ECOLOGY IN POLICY

Against that background, at both national and local level, we are engaged in dialogue with governments

"In Madagascar, our aim is landscape management that respects the ecological parameters for sustainable development. We are strengthening civil society organisations to help encourage citizens, government and businesses to work towards that aim."

Mark van der Wal, expert Madagascar at IUCN NL

about sustainable development scenarios, seen from the viewpoint of the greater landscape. We are promoting awareness of the relationship between ecology and economy so that government policy can ensure that crucial ecosystem services are preserved for the longer term.

INVOLVING CITIZENS

Well-informed citizens can play a crucial role in enforcing legislation and regulations designed to protect nature and ecosystems in the long term. For that reason we are building awareness of the possibilities of protecting and responsibly using the natural resource base, in order to support and sustain the local populations. At local level, we have developed a series of mechanisms for sharing information about ecology and development: using social media, rural radio broadcasting and small-scale information centres for journalists.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Both in influencing policy and involving communities, IUCN NL works closely alongside local organisations. They understand the specific context like no other and are in close contact with local communities.

We train and coach our local partner organisations to strengthen their skills to enable them to influence governance and spatial planning processes. We have also initiated dialogue between businesses, citizens and nature conservation groups, so that they can help each other learn how to reduce risks.

Do you want to help IUCN NL make sustainable development on Madagascar possible? Visit our [website](#) for detailed information or contact our expert **Mark van der Wal**.

Example of our work

Responsible mining: learning from the Philippines

Over the past ten years, plans have been developed for a number of large new mines on the northwestern coast. These are expected to have a large-scale impact on the affected landscapes in Madagascar. Although the diving sector, the plantation industry and the Protected Areas may well be negatively impacted by the influence of these mines on the environment, the government and the mining companies have failed to inform these stakeholders fully.

In collaboration with the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment (NCEA), IUCN NL has organised workshops on Strategic Environmental Assessment and how this process can be used to arrive at inclusive decision making. Thanks to these workshops, neutral and open discussions were organised with all relevant stakeholders.

Elsewhere, we have facilitated learning sessions between local NGOs, government officers and representatives of mining companies from Madagascar, and their counterparts from the Philippines. On the Philippines, based on a long history of destructive mining, civil society groups have developed a clear vision on how the mining sector should be organised in a way that delivers maximum benefit for society, while limiting the risks as far as possible, also in the long term.

The visit to the Philippines so impressed the delegation from Madagascar that one year later civil society organisations and government representatives from the Philippines were invited to Madagascar to share their expertise with the Ministry of Mining, the Ministry of the Environment, the Chamber of Mines and the two largest mining companies.