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Special Session Proposal

Nature-based Solutions on Small and Medium Islands

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Abstract

The relevance of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for Small and Medium Islands (SMIs) extends to the preservation and enhancement of crucial ecosystem services, thereby ensuring the sustained well-being of both the environment and island communities resulting from the effects of climate change, water security, wild fire prevention, economic and social development, biodiversity loss.

SMIs often rely heavily on ecosystem services for their livelihoods and daily functioning. Coastal ecosystems, like mangroves and coral reefs, provide invaluable services such as storm protection, shoreline stabilization, and habitat for fish. NbS, by preserving and restoring these ecosystems, contribute directly to the resilience of SMIs against extreme weather events and rising sea levels. This is particularly pertinent given the susceptibility of SMIs to climate-induced disasters.

Moreover, NbS address water security, thus playing a critical role in water resource management on islands, where freshwater is often scarce. Healthy ecosystems regulate water flow, improve water quality, and recharge aquifers, ensuring a sustainable and reliable water supply for island communities. This is essential for agriculture, domestic use, and maintaining biodiversity.

In the context of sustainable development, NbS support, among all, the tourism industry—a vital economic sector for many SMIs. Implementing NbS intervention to conserve natural landscapes and biodiversity doesn't only safeguard the aesthetic and cultural value of the islands, but also contributes to their long-term economic sustainability, through enhanced sustainable activities such as ecotourism.

By recognizing and investing in NbS interventions, SMIs can harness the inherent capacity of ecosystems to provide essential services. This approach not only bolsters the islands' ability to adapt to climate change, but also promotes a harmonious relationship between nature and human societies in these unique and vulnerable settings.

Suggested titles:

Nikolaos nikolaidis- Optimizing the WEF Nexus of rural areas using NBS.

Mirela Tase – The potentials and challenges of developing sustainable and safety tourism in Albania.

Mart Külvik- Stakeholders' Identification to Co-create Nature-based Solutions on Small and Medium Islands.

Shiri Zemah-Shamir – Tools of effectiveness, feasibility, acceptance, and cost and benefits of applying NbS in SMIs

Geula Bitton – Using CBA as an economic effectiveness tool for NbS

Ziv Zemah-Shamir – NbS for the marine environment