

Chukwani Mangroves Forest Reserve



A restoration development program of the Jane Goodall Institute Netherlands in Zanzibar.

Introduction

Mangrove forests can be found along sheltered coastlines in the tropics and subtropics, where they fulfill important socio-economic and ecological functions. Such as the supply of timber, coastal protection and conservation of biological diversity in these areas. But also, for example, the protection of coral reefs and seagrass beds and the supply of nutrients to a variety of fish and crustaceans.

Recently it has become clear that mangrove forests are the key to a healthy coastal ecosystem. Studies show that at the end of the 20th century, less than 50 percent of the world's mangrove forests were still intact and half of the remaining forests are in poor condition. These forests are now among the most endangered habitats in the world and their loss is great all over the world. Only 1 percent has been protected so far.

Mangroves in Tanzania

The mangrove forests in Tanzania as a whole are declining drastically due to human and natural threats. Sea level rise and climate change also seem to explain the decline in mangroves. Mangrove loss is estimated at 1% or 150,000 hectares per year over the past two decades. There is a danger that the ecological goods and services that these healthy mangrove forests provide, such as coastal protection against erosion, will be lost. Since 2003, the mangroves have been protected by law, but it is necessary to replenish the lost mangroves to stimulate their recovery.



Zanzibar mangroves

The mangrove forests of Zanzibar are one of the most important coastal habitats in Zanzibar and are the second largest natural forest vegetation. The mangrove forests cover almost nine percent of the total land area, one third of which is on Zanzibar Island, and in 10 different types.

Trampling by people is one of the main causes of damage, as well as pollution from the discharge of household waste.

It is very important to properly emphasize the awareness and understanding of the socio-ecological values of mangroves and the need for their conservation by both the government and non-governmental parties. There must also be more reliable and up-to-date information about the scope, changes and vulnerability for management purposes.

Due to the lack of mapping, there is still a demand for insight into the current situation of mangrove threats. The Jane Goodall Institute (= JGI) is therefore taking over the management, research and conservation of the Chukwani Mangroves Forest Reserve from the Ministry of Natural Resources Tourism in Zanzibar in the short term.

Chukwani Mangroves Forest Reserve
 Located in the center of Zanzibar Island, on the west coast at Stone Town, Chukwani is an intact mosaic of urban vegetation in Zanzibar. Chukwani Forest Reserve covers 106 acres and is established as Jane Goodall's Mangroves Restoration site. The intention is to plant mangroves, as well as create conservation plans for the population themselves to participate in, such as joint management plans, zoning plans, a community based recovery program, cleanups, educational mangrove field trips for children to connect young people with the community. nature, mapping, development of nature interpretation programs and ecotourism.



The project

Through these interventions, the project is expected to inspire young people and adult members of the community to understand coastal and marine ecology, in which mangroves, seagrass beds and coral reefs often co-exist. The trees trap sediment and pollutants that would otherwise flow to the sea. Seagrass beds provide a further barrier to silt and mud that could choke the reefs. In return, the reefs protect the seagrass beds and mangroves from strong ocean waves. Without mangroves, this incredibly productive ecosystem would collapse.

Because of this importance, JGI-Tanzania and JGI-Holland are collaborating on the design of a holistic, self-sustaining project to support conservation development interventions aimed at, among other things, increasing CO2 and carbon storage capacity, and recreational opportunities for the Chukwani Mangrove forests, and involving the community, which ultimately also has socio-economic benefits.



JGI plans to use these developed facilities to conduct short courses of young emerging scientists on mangrove conservation and biodiversity data collection. But also ecotourism activities, such as planting mangroves, hiking, paddling and building mangrove trails. In addition to Roots & Shoots activities, training will also be given, aimed at georeferencing and cartography in mangroves. Ultimately, this is a very important project that is expected to benefit 240 Roots & Shoots school groups and 12 women's communities already engaged in mangrove conservation. This project is also expected to encourage the government to actively manage mangrove forests in Zanzibar.

Budget

The first rough estimate to make the mangrove project self-sufficient with eco-tourism is that a minimum support of 3 years is required at a cost of € 10,000 per year. After the assurance of 3 years of support, Zanzibar's mangroves are expected to become a protected area and a self-sustaining eco-attraction.

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