



REPRISE PROJECT - RESTORATION OF ECOSYSTEMS FOR THE PREVENTION OF RISKS AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES 2018 - 2021

IDENTITY CARD

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

New Caledonia - customary districts of Leweo and Bas-Nindiah Commune of Houaïlou

NATURAL RISKS TARGETED

- Soil erosion, landslides
- Flooding

HABITAT(S) CONCERNED

Forest

TYPES OF NBAS

Restoration of degraded ecosystems

PROJECT LEADER AND PARTNERS

nune de Houaïlo rine Aubert

Municipal authority of Houaïlou

FUNDERS AND BUDGET

- French Agency for Ecological Transition (ADEME) (56%)
- Eramet-SLN mining group (34%)
- ENERCAL hydroelectric company (5%)
- Municipal authority of Houaïlou(5%)

Total budget : **1 463 000€**



WAA WI LUU



PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- For adaptation to climate changes : soil erosion mitigation and flood prevention.
- For biodiversity : facilitating the recovery of biodiversity.

REGULATORY CONTEXT

- Forêt domaniale
- Périmètres de protection des eaux de captages d'alimentation en eau potable
- Anciens sites miniers non réhabilités

CONTEXT AND ISSUES

On 22nd November 2016, exceptionally heavy rains led to serious floods and deadly mudslides, which caused the death of 8 people and approximately 10 million euros of damage in the commune of Houailou. This catastrophe mainly affected zones that had been degraded (by recurrent fires, scraper mining and invasive species), highlighting the importance of conserving and restoring ecosystems to protect them from natural risks and strengthen the resilience of local communities with regard to climate changes.

ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED

The REPISE Project, designed and led by the Houailou municipal authority in response to this need, is the winner of a national ADEME request for proposals concerning projects for "pilot sites for the recovery of biodiversity." Its aim is to restore terrestrial ecosystems in order to mitigate soil erosion, prevent the risks of drying out, landslides and floods, and facilitate the recovery of biodiversity. To achieve this objective, the municipal authority developed various restoration measures in zones identified as high-priority (catchments providing drinking water, former mining sites, places of cultural importance, etc.): relief renovation on scrape-mined areas, anti-erosion systems such as fascines (bundles of interwoven branches),

regulation of invasive alien species, planting of some hundred forest species endemic or indigenous to the bioregion, and protection of the restored area from degradation by invasive ungulates and assisted natural regeneration in several areas.

Launched in April 2018 for a provisional duration of three years, REPRISE is characterised by an innovative and participative system of governance that involves local communities in the co-management of the environment, together with institutions, technical partners and the industrial companies co-funding the project, with a view to sustaining the activities undertaken.

CALENDAR

PROJECT SCHEDULE

2018 - 2021	- Uprooting of Pinus species - Planting of pioneer species (Kaori etc.)
	- Planting of sandalwood and coffee to create local commercial activity
	 Encourage and raise the awareness of the local population to develop this commerce

Training (safety & security, firearm maintenance, etc.) and awareness-raising for hunters so as to regulate invasive forest species (Cervidae and wild pigs)

Setting up of a conservation agreement with the customary authorities for the post-project phase

GOVERNANCE ADOPTED

The implementation of the project was based on 6 committees :

- A steering committee composed of institutional, technical, industrial and customary stakeholders. It validates the progress status and strategic directions of the project;
- Three technical committees, invasive ungulates, ecological and economic reforestation, monitoring and sustainability. They bring together the organisations involved in the monitoring and validation of intermediate technical deliverables;
- A scientific committee made up of diverse experts which is consulted to consolidate the definition of the operations plan and the design of the systems for monitoring gains in biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- A monitoring committee comprising the French Agency for Ecological Transition (ADEME), the State Forest, Agriculture and Environment Service, the French Biodiversity Agency (OFB) and Houaïlou Municipal Authority, which meets once a year to for validate the compliance of the operations undertaken and the project's contractual deliverables.

The participation of local communities in the various components of the project relies on the making up of mixed teams (men and women) and the inclusion of representatives of the various clans, young people and amateur hunters, all of whom are in the selection and monitoring of the high-priority restoration sites, restoration works, impact assessment and training in good hunting practice.



BENEFITS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE PROJECT

BENEFITS REGARDING TARGETED ADAPTATION ISSUES

- Reduced soil erosion
- Reduced risk of flooding

BENEFITS FOR BIODIVERSITY

- 40 ha reforested with local tree species suited to climatic conditions on 7 highpriority sites (4 catchments providing drinking water, 1 former mine, 2 areas of heavy land disturbance due to the omnipresence of pigs and deer species together with recurrent fires), and 2 demonstrational/educational sites (upstream of the private catchment of an agricultural high school and on the orienteering ground of a professional high school);
- 20 ha of proliferating Caribbean pine (*Pinus caribaea*) eliminated and replaced by some hundred endemic forest species as recommended by a botanist. Planting of about 20 species in each zone (such as the Blue Marble Tree (*Elaeocarpus angustifolius*), Koghis Kauri (*Agathis lanceolata*) or Large-flowered Crossostylis (*Crossostylis grandiflora*)).



OTHER BENEFITS



- Involvement of local stakeholders in the project (local communities, industrial companies, institutions)
- Capacity-building of local hunters and NGOs;
- Reduction of fire risks due to human causes by the involvement of local people in the project.

MONITORING INDICATORS

Adaptation to climate changes

• Soil stability : participative and scientific monitoring systems were set up to measure the evolution of soil stability (for example, the soil retention capacity of roots).

Biodiversity

- Measurements of the biological quality of rivers (for example, water turbidity) and forest ecosystems (for example, plant growth).
- This long-term scientific monitoring is based on the intervention of experts every 1 to 5 years (e.g., monitoring by remote sensing, bioindicators of benthic macroinvertebrates, standardised monitoring of herpetofauna, etc.)

LEVERS FOR SUCCESS

- **Technical skills :** the skills of all the project partners (departments of the institutions responsible and industrial partners, public organisations supporting the project, etc.) enabled realistic and appropriate objectives and implementation methodologies to be defined.
- Funding: the success of the work carried out and the popularity of the project with local communities greatly contributed to convincing the private investors to provide the finances for the REPRISE funding plan.
- Governance/concertation: the involvement of customary representatives in governance and the high level of concertation with local communities throughout the project enabled and maintained support for it among local people, who took the project onboard and actively participated in its implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• Plan to replicate the project in the Houailou commune, over a more extensive area and with revised objectives for concerted long-term management of the environment.

ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO THE IUCN'S GLOBAL STANDARD FOR NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

The results were communicated throughout the project at various levels: promotion of the restoration works on social media, local media coverage of official ceremonies or events, publication of articles on the project in the municipal newsletter and an illustrated progress report every four months for the stakeholders. Communication media aimed at young people, the general public and/or private organisations were also produced, in order to assist with the replication of the project: a cartoon, a documentary and a technical brochure.

https://radiococotier.nc/2021/04/24/les-12-travaux-de-wa-wi-luu/. (in French)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bn7KR6KH-1Q (in French)

The REPRISE project has spread though the region. This is shown by the Oceanian Regional Project of Territories for the Sustainable Management of Ecosystems (PROTEGE), which is an initiative aimed at promoting sustainable and durable economic development in response to climate change within the European Union's Pacific Overseas Countries and Territories (POCTs), based on biodiversity and renewable natural resources.

https://protege.spc.int/fr

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