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The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.

Blue Guide | Community of practice

Newsletter

Introduction

Greetings from Arakwal land on Bundjalung Country on the most easterly coastline of Australia. This first newsletter aims to bring you updates and new ideas around nature-based solutions (NbS) as well as some reflections from graduates of the Training of Trainers (ToT).

More than six months have passed since we completed the training in Micronesia and Indonesia, and more than four months since the Caribbean training was finished. What has happened since?

Before we leap into some more content I would like to share reflections that are perhaps more locally relevant but may present some different world views on how we can think about NbS.

This week in Australia we commemorate our First Nations people through NAIDOC (National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee) Week which celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. NAIDOC Week is celebrated by all Australians and the theme for 2021 is "Heal Country".

Why am I sharing this?

First Nations people in Australia are the oldest continuous culture with over 60,000 years of habitation and connection to land and sea. Caring for country is integral to their beliefs and

practices and informing their deep knowledge of how to do this, is being reclaimed and renewed.

We often think of ourselves as outside an ecosystem — an observer, a preserver or sometimes a destroyer. However, for First Nations Australians (and many other indigenous cultures), there is an integral connection to all ecosystems.

Law and spirituality is deeply connected to their relationship with the land and water.

As our local Arakwal Elder Auntie Delta Kay so poignantly said: "Being in and part of Country keeps us connected to our culture and ancestors. It's our duty to look after Country...and Country looks after us."

"Traditional ways of life were centred around ensuring the use of all resources was sustainable and water is a significant part of that balance. In traditional ways of managing the health of Country, there is no strict separation of water, land, air, plants and animals, as we are all interconnected. They are managed as a whole to keep Country healthy."

With ongoing devastating disasters like fires, floods, melting ice sheets and Covid-19 raging across the planet, at this time, I am asking you to sit back for a moment and think about how you, your family, your organisation and your practices are supporting the ecosystems you are engaging with and integrally part of.



Australia Aunty Delta Kay sharing local native foods.

Photo: Sally Moore

Micronesia news

Following up from the training in Micronesia last year we caught up with Berna Gorong the Conservation Planner with TNC in Micronesia.

Q1. What was the key take away for you from the ToT last year?

The online training was not only effective but also doable.

Q2. Can you share some information about the follow up training you conducted, for example who were the trainers and who were the participants, how many days?

We conducted a three-day training in Yap, FSM (April 12 to 14, 2021). The trainers were Berna Gorong (Conservation Planner with TNC Micronesia Program), Tasmin Falan (Yap State Protected Areas Network Coordinator), and Bertha Reyuw (Capacity Building & Partnership Coordinator with Micronesia Conservation Trust).

The training targeted DRR & conservation practitioners working in Yap State from government, community, and regional partners (Micronesia Red Cross, Yap State Office of Planning, Yap Protected Area Network, FSM Ridge to Reef, Marine Resources Management, Catholic Relief Services, Riken Community).

Micronesia Participants in the Micronesia NbS training

Photo: Berna Gorong

What a great turn out and good to see these three graduates from the ToT passing on their knowledge and skills!



Q3. What were the key outcomes you observed from the training? Any specific recommendations for other trainers?

Having mixed groups of participants from DRR and conservation practitioners, government and non-government, all together in the training facilitated a better understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities of each entity or group.

It helped to clarify where their tasks overlapped with each other, and opened up discussions on forging better collaboration for future activities and work plans. This is key in better serving our communities; partner collaborations instead of partners competing for scarce community resources (human resources and time).

It also demonstrated the real time use of the Solution Finder and allowed the group to work through this tool together face to face — something we had not been able to do in the training.”

Q4. What future plans do you have around NbS in Micronesia?

We will continue to facilitate and promote a more holistic approach with community planning, supporting communities in resilient planning around climate change adaptation, DRR, conservation, and small scale sustainable economic enterprises.



Training news

In May Patrick and Sally presented the Solution Finder from the Blue Guide to a group of 48 participants, from 18 different countries in the IORA (Indian Ocean Rim Association) Blue Carbon Hub 'Think Tank': Nature-Based Solutions for Coastal Risk Reduction.

As part of a session looking at NbS, the presentation took participants through the steps of the Solution Finder using a completed example.

The 2.5 day think tank started with fairly broad descriptions of the nature of the challenges and drilled progressively into solutions. In the last half day participants opened up for broader conversations and thinking about how to build collaborations and capacity to implement NbS solutions across the Indian Ocean regions.

New training resources

We are excited to announce the **Blue Guide** including the training resources is currently being translated into Spanish and Indonesian. Watch the [website](#) for the launch of these products. New resources (i.e. videos, tools, networks, publications) are being added regularly to the library section of the platform. A reminder also that Sally and Patrick are available for mentoring around the Blue Guide, so if you are planning on conducting training feel free to reach out for support.

Read the [blog](#) on the Blue Guide by the [Global Disaster Preparedness Center](#) and the [Climate Centre](#) ([Building coastal resilience the natural way: a new guide – Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre](#)).

IFRC has released a new free online course on **Nature based Solutions for disaster and climate resilience**. "Harnessing Nature-based Solutions is a new priority area for the Red Cross Red Crescent movement and one of the targets of the IFRC Plan and Budget 2021-2025"

The online course was developed by the UN Environment Program (UNEP) and the Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction (PEDRR). Seven hours long, it is available in English, Arabic, French, Spanish, Chinese/Mandarin, Hindi and Indonesian and is open to everyone.

You can register [here](#) as a new user or log in as an existing user to access the course.

Free Ecosystem Restoration Course: [Register](#) for the United Nations Development Programme and the Convention on Biological Diversity's [free self-paced course on Ecosystem Restoration](#), which begins on 3 September. In this self-paced course you will learn to develop a step-by-step ecosystem restoration plan and apply effective restoration solutions in your national and subnational context.

The Reef Resilience Network has launched a new training on [Coral Reef Resilience](#). This course is designed to provide marine resource managers and practitioners with the necessary background to support coral reef resilience in the face of climate change.

This course consists of six lessons that explore the ecology of coral reef ecosystems, the threats reefs face from climate change and people, the principles and attributes of social-ecological reef resilience, how to assess and monitor reefs for resilience, the concepts of resilience-based management, and the strategies available for managing reefs for resilience.

[The new Wastewater Pollution](#)

[Toolkit](#) provides the latest science and strategies to help marine managers address wastewater threats wherever they work. The series of webpages summarises the impacts of wastewater pollution to human and marine health; current management strategies and innovative solutions; and approaches to mitigate wastewater pollution through monitoring, management, and collaboration. The latest science and examples of monitoring and management strategies are provided through 10 case studies, 29 journal article summaries, and a series of webinars.

The Reef Resilience Network has other online training courses to support work in practical reef restoration as well as advocacy and communications.

The [IORA Indian Ocean Blue Carbon Hub](#) aims to provide advice about ways to support implementation of actions that help protect and restore blue carbon ecosystems. Incorporation of blue carbon into climate policy is an important way of supporting such actions, but to develop sound policies countries need good data about their carbon stocks, and the rates at which carbon is sequestered. To help achieve this, the hub is producing a set of videos that demonstrate some of the methods used in the field and laboratory.

The first shows how to use simple material to extract a core from a seagrass meadow, so the organic carbon in the underlying soil can be measured. The video is available [here](#), and a version with subtitles in Bahasa is available [here](#).

More videos will be uploaded soon onto their YouTube channel. The videos are used in conjunction with manuals that explain the methods, such as the manual produced by the [Blue Carbon Initiative](#), and one more specific to seagrass produced through the [ASEAN Sub Committee on Marine Science and Technology](#).

Other resources

A comprehensive new [report](#) by the [Global Mangrove Alliance](#) shows the benefits mangroves deliver to people and nature and how they can be saved.

Costa Rica recently announced its commitment to restore and protect coastal wetlands—including 22,000 hectares of the country’s mangroves—as part of its updated nationally determined contribution (NDC) to the Paris Agreement.

Moving beyond the nature-based solutions discourse: introducing nature-based thinking

While concepts and approaches have been launched during recent years to promote urban nature and greener cities, it is doubtful whether tinkering within the current economic and political system can provide adequate solutions. Nature-based solutions can be seen as a new conceptual approach to the human-ecological connection, and as an outcome of an evolutionary development of socio-ecological concepts. The approach of Nature Based Thinking draws inspiration from nature as an outset for the development of more sustainable and inclusive cities, balancing anthropocentric and ecocentric values and acknowledging the importance of the social and governance dimensions in a more balanced socio-ecological perspective.

Another new resource is the **Coastal and Marine Ecosystems as Nature-Based Solutions in new or updated Nationally Determined Contributions.**

SER - the Society for Ecological Restoration is a great resource for activities, research, results and learning. If you have not as yet explored their website head [here](#) to find out more.

The **UNDP Learning from Nature** site has a vast number of resources including E-learning courses in different languages, stories from the field , webinars, podcasts and micro courses.

The **Think Nature Platform** is a multi-stakeholder communication platform supporting the understanding and promotion of NbS. Through continuous dialogue and interaction using forums and debates it aims to identify, communicate and promote successful NbS.

Identify regulatory, economic and technical barriers and foster collaboration at local, regional, national and EU levels and develop synergy with other projects on NbS. While this is an EU-based platform, there are some great resources including a Handbook, an interactive game “Greentown” based on a city where you are the mayor. The game is to demonstrate the impact of choices and thereby the advantages of using nature-based solutions. Other articles and resources are more global. There is something for everyone on this platform.

In June 2021 China’s Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), together with IUCN, officially launched the **Chinese version of the IUCN Global Standard for NbS** and guidance, along with 10 new case studies, to advance Nature-based Solutions (NbS) actions throughout the country.

IUCN continues to have valuable and practical resources including articles, tools and publications in multiple languages. There are downloadable info graphs which can be very helpful in explaining the value of NbS. I particularly liked this one below.

So that is all we have for now for this first newsletter. We hope you enjoyed reading and linking to some of what is happening in the world of NbS.

If you would like to contribute a piece or share some new resources please feel free to send something in for the next newsletter which will be coming out in November.

Stay safe, stay well.
Sally and Patrick

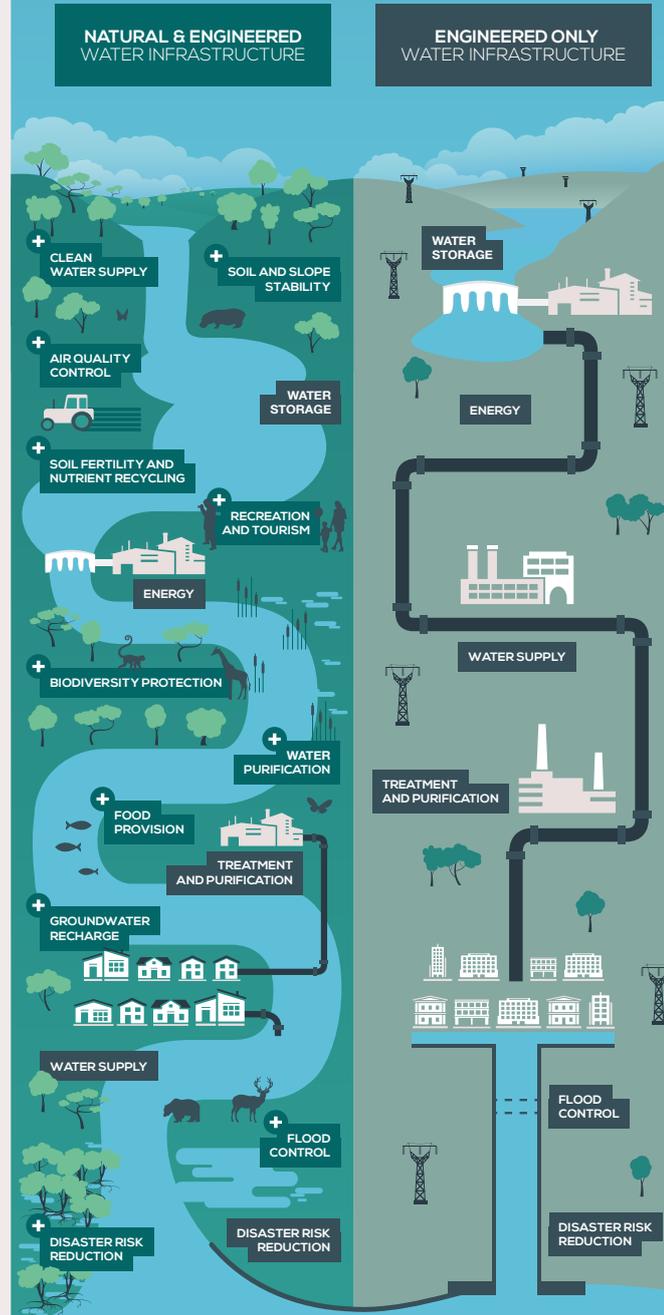


GOING WITH THE FLOW

working with nature

Natural infrastructure works with engineered infrastructure to optimise performance and financial benefits

Services provided by natural & engineered water infrastructure



Added benefit:
\$29 TRILLION PER YEAR
in natural water infrastructure services¹

BUSINESS AS USUAL

Natural water infrastructure services: soil and slope stability, clean water supply, water purification, soil fertility and nutrient recycling, water storage, air quality control, habitat provision and biodiversity protection, food provision, groundwater recharge, recreation and tourism, disaster risk reduction, flood control

1. Value estimated for wetlands (tidal marsh/mangroves, swamps/floodplains), rivers and lakes, based on 2011 area and 2007 USD values. Source: R. Costanza et al. Global Environmental Change 26 (2014) 162-165