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HANDING-OVER EVENT IN ZANZIBAR OF AN EU FUNDED CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECT IMPLEMENTED BY "COMMUNITY FOREST PEMBA"

Climate Change Resilience Project in Zanzibar proves Smart Climate Action creates economic opportunity

Wednesday, 18 September 2019 Pemba Island, Zanzibar: Today Government representatives, community leaders and members of the European Union Delegation to Tanzania convened on Pemba Island to celebrate successes and lessons learnt from an ambitious four year climate change resilience and poverty reduction initiative. The project, which is called '*The Scalable Resilience: Outspreading Islands of Adaptation*' is funded by the EU for an amount of EUR 1 million (Approx. TZS 2.542 billion).

Led by the local NGO, "Community Forest Pemba (CFP)" in partnership with the Wete District Authority, the work was funded under the EU Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA+) programme and spanned 32 at-risk communities across all four districts of Pemba Island, reaching 33,600 people with a wide range of activities including solar energy, rainwater harvesting, climate-smart agriculture, and mangrove forest restoration.

During his speech, the Guest of Honour, Regional Commissioner for North Pemba, Hon. Omar Khamis Othman stated that, *"On behalf of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar and myself, I pledge that we will continue to encourage, monitor and work closely to ensure that the programs initiated by Community Forests Pemba through the GCCA Tanzania program are sustained and continue bringing benefits to the Pemba community."*

Speaking at the ceremony, Mrs Jenny Correia Nunes, EU Head of Natural Resources, said, *"The project we are handing over here today has proven that Climate-Smart Actions work and create economic opportunities for the communities. A good example is the spice growers who have introduced new techniques and are now exporting their spices to Europe. It is my hope that this project will serve as a good model of how we can adapt to the negative impact of climate change by planting trees, applying climate-smart agriculture and a wide range of other adaptation strategies demonstrated and documented by the project."*

One of the many lessons highlighted today is the strong link achieved between smart climate action and economic growth. The majority of project participants have improved their income by engaging in new, more climate resilient approaches to their work. 35 new local producer groups have been established supporting enterprises as diverse as clean cook-stove manufacturing, sustainable forestry management, and fair trade spice marketing.



"We are living on the front lines of climate change here in Pemba – our small island environment is already affected by rising sea levels and so many other climate challenges. But now the world is paying attention to Pemba because of the innovative community solutions." [1]. "We are thankful for the generous support of the European Union, our international partners, and all of the hard work of local communities through this effort – we are together," said Mr. Mbarouk Mussa Omar, Founder and Executive Director of CFP.

The production of high value spice crops like vanilla, in new tree-based farm systems that are more resilient to the negative effects of climate change, has been especially successful with a new island-wide farmer cooperative coming out of the project to meet the growing international demand.

"Spice growing brings me money and helps me to tackle several issues like paying school fees. It ensures I have food in the house and helps pay for clothes. I am also aware of climate change - nobody should be allowed to just cut down trees, because we need shade to plant our vanilla and without shade there is no moisture and we can't plant anything" says Mrs. Bimajo Massoud Juma, project beneficiary and Committee Member of the newly formed Pemba Spice Producers Cooperative (PROSPER).

The project together with local community groups have planted 646,113 trees in an effort to bring back the island's lost forests, important both for slowing down climate change globally, and for enhancing local adaptation. The coastal mangrove forests surrounding Pemba are especially valuable in protecting communities from rising sea levels as they slow down the encroachment of saltwater into low lying farmland and drinking water supplies. Mangrove forests also store more carbon than almost any other forest type on the planet – keeping carbon out of the atmosphere where it would otherwise worsen climate change. [2]

Background:

The GCCA Tanzania programme is part of the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA+), a flagship initiative of the European Union helping the world's most vulnerable countries, mainly Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) to increase their resilience to climate change.

The overall objective of the GCCA Tanzania programme is to support five projects in Tanzania to increase the capacity of vulnerable communities to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change and contribute to poverty reduction in rural areas. The programme consists of five eco-village projects implemented in different agro-ecological zones in the country. These include Eco ACT in Dodoma Region, ECOBOMA in Arusha Region, Community Forests Pemba in Zanzibar, Igunga Eco-Village in Tabora Region and the Integrated Approaches to Climate Change Adaptation in East Usambara in Tanga Region.

The first GCCA programme was initiated in Tanzania in 2010-2013 to support the Government in strengthening the capacity of some of the most affected communities against the adverse impacts of climate change. The Second GCCA national initiative started in 2015 and has built on the results of the first phase to enhance environmental sustainability and food security by strengthening the management of natural resources at the local level (eco-villages). Essential to all projects have been to support new technologies and low cost culturally acceptable and gender-oriented solutions, and increasing the potential for scaling-up and replication.



[1] [*This island was on the brink of disaster. Then, they planted thousands of trees.*](#) Sarah Gibbens. *National Geographic* (09-12-2018).

[2] [*Mangroves among the most carbon-rich forests in the tropics.*](#) Daniel C. Donato, J. Boone Kauffman, Daniel Murdiyarso, Sofyan Kurnianto, Melanie Stidham & Markku Kanninen. *Nature Geoscience* volume 4, pages 293–297 (2011).

For more information please contact:

Mbarouk Omar , Community Forests Pemba Executive Director Tel: +255 777 427 450 Email: mbarouk@forestsinternational.org Web: https://forestsinternational.org/	Susanne Mbise, EU Press & Information Officer Tel: +255 (0)754323245 Email: Susanne.MBISE@eeas.europa.eu Web: https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tanzania
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