

HOW CAN A FOCUS ON EQUITY IN NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS HELP TO ADDRESS SOCIETAL CHALLENGES FROM THE GROUND UP?

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Developing a nuanced understanding of social equity can be complex and slow. Yet, working from the ground up to achieve social equity can address local societal challenges while ultimately contributing to addressing broader societal challenges and achieving global Sustainable Development Goals.

EQUITABLE SOLUTIONS TO GLOBAL SOCIETAL CHALLENGES REQUIRE A FOCUS ON EQUITY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

WHAT ARE EQUITABLE NbS?

Equitable NbS are fair, respectful, socially responsive, and socially inclusive. They engender wellbeing for the groups and individuals situated at or near to the NbS site, providing more for those who need more.



MITIGATE DISBENEFITS

particularly for the most vulnerable



PROMOTE EQUITABLE BENEFITS

particularly for those that need more



SOCIAL EQUITY AS AN OUTCOME

LANDSCAPES & ECOSYSTEMS



Natural/Semi-natural

Ecosystems (relatively self-sustaining or undisturbed) that are valued for biodiversity and the services they provide, such as savannas, grasslands, shrublands or rangelands



Farming/Cultural

Landscapes modified by humans for food and non-food production, recreation and other cultural uses, such as farmland (cropland and grazing lands) or recreational parks



Built/Semi-built

Human-built or engineered areas or spaces existing in transformed environments or representing transformed environments, such as green roofs and artificial wetlands

NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

Nature-based solutions (NbS) are interventions and actions carried out within a variety of landscapes and ecosystems to address a range of societal challenges. NbS aim to improve biodiversity and human well-being relative to the pre-NbS state.



Other terms related to all or some of these categories include ecosystem-based adaptation and community-based natural resource management (among others).



Protection

Natural or semi-natural lands demarcated through effective or legal means where activities are governed by statutory or non-statutory processes, such as nature reserves, sacred forests or conservancies



Restoration

Degraded or farming/cultural lands returned to some prior natural or semi-natural state, through activities such as alien plant clearing, dambo restoration and species reintroduction



Sustainable management

Maintenance or return of specific ecosystem functions to sustain or enhance productivity and resilience, such as agroforestry, harvesting quotas or cover crops



Creation

Ecosystem-like characteristics created to harness specific ecosystem-like functions, such as planting vegetation on roofs, and constructing artificial wetlands or permeable pavements

INCORPORATE MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF EQUITY



Recognition

Recognition, respect and representation of local or traditional knowledge systems, different cultural identities, and statutory and customary rights in NbS



Procedural

Inclusive and effective participation in rule and decision-making for NbS, transparency and access to information in appropriate forms, access to justice, and access to a consultative process to negotiate conditions of NbS



Distributional

Fairness of distribution of benefits of NbS between different groups, including current and future generations, and the mitigation of burdens of the NbS

SOCIAL EQUITY AS A PROCESS

focusing on the most vulnerable during the design, planning and implementation of NbS interventions and actions



Financial

Access to financial resources



Information

Awareness or access to information or technology



Physical

Non-climate physical or biogeographical barriers



Social/Cultural

Social norms, identity, place attachment, beliefs, worldviews, values, awareness, education, social justice, social support, history



Governance

Informal, customary or legal, and formalised: laws, regulations, procedural requirements, institutional arrangements, tenure systems



Human capacity

Individual, organisational, and societal capabilities including training, education, and skill development



Environmental

Disease, illness, temperature, precipitation, salinity, extreme events (droughts, floods, storms), including the effects of climate change on these aspects



Structural

Deeply entrenched, systemic and macro-level socio-political and economic biases that perpetuate poverty, inequality and inequity across scales

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