

**NEWS RELEASE**



**New Caledonia launches implementation of Ecosystem-based Adaptation to Climate Change project**



*View of Noumea from the peak Malaoui, New Caledonia. Photo : Damocean*

*Noumea, New Caledonia - October 13, 2023.*

**Coastal erosion, drying up of rivers, floods, fires, the declining health of corals and loss of biodiversity are increasingly confronting us as consequences of climate change. Faced with these challenges, ecosystem-based adaptation offers effective and adaptable responses by implementing measures to protect, sustainably manage and restore ecosystems and the services they provide. It is with these in mind that the Pacific Ecosystem-based Adaptation to Climate Change Plus (PEBACC+) Project Steering Committee for New Caledonia met for the first time to mark the official launch of the project.**

The PEBACC+ project, implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), aims to strengthen the resilience of ecosystems, people and economies in Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, New Caledonia and Wallis and Futuna. The PEBACC+ project receives €4 million in funding from the Kiwa Initiative and €1.8 million from the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM).

SPREP Coastal and Marine Management Specialist, Mr. Nicolas Rocle said, "The work conducted so far has allowed us to refine the objectives and activities of PEBACC+ in New Caledonia, to ensure they match the needs and priorities expressed by public authorities.

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It is a great satisfaction to officially launch the project today and start the implementation phase of the project, through partnerships, respectful of all responsibilities, also mindful of other initiatives and programmes that are complementary to the PEBACC+ project," added Mr. Rocle.

The operational budget of PEBACC+ in New Caledonia is 85 million CFP francs. This budget will be allocated to the following activities in the three provinces:

- Technical and financial support for demonstration activities, including coastal protection in Ouvéa for the Loyalty Islands province, preservation of urban mangroves in Greater Noumea for the South Province, and improvement of fire management in the mining south for the North Province.
- Analysis of ecosystem and socio-economic resilience for the identification of Nature-based Priority Solutions will be determined by the application of Ecosystem and Socio-economic Resilience Analysis and Mapping (ESRAM).
- Support for territorial actors for the sustainable integration of priority ecosystem-based solutions into their strategic frameworks and policies for adaptation to climate change.

The PEBACC+ Project convened key stakeholders at the Project Steering Committee to recognise their participation, to enable learning, sharing of lessons and strengthen partnerships to ensure a successful implementation of the project in New Caledonia.

President of the South Province, Mrs. Sonia Backes said, "The PEBACC+ project plans to implement concrete actions by the end of 2025 based on Nature-based Solutions, which will be in line with our priority public policies in the face of the challenges of climate change, such as the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and its ecosystem services, conservation of water resources, and more. "

First Vice-President of the Province of the Loyalty Islands, Mr. Robert Kapoeril said, "The project that we want to carry out in the bay of St-Joseph in the north of Ouvéa/laaï, in consultation with the communities and their customs, is an innovative solution that will make it possible to preserve the biodiversity and ecosystem, in particular the Ouvéa vegetation and lagoon."

The Director of Economic Development and Environment of the Northern Province, Mr. Nathaniel Cornuet, adds that the PEBACC+ project will strengthen the resilience of ecosystems and populations by improving fire control and assistance to natural regeneration, as well as restoring ecosystems in priority areas such as watersheds and agricultural areas; also envisaged is work on addressing hunting practices and agroecology.

The PEBACC+ Country Steering Committee was held on Thursday, 12 October 2023 and included representatives from SPREP, the Government of New Caledonia, the provinces of the Loyalty Islands, North and South, the Associations of Mayors and the Customary Senate. Observer members (Agence Française de Développement (AFD), FFEM, Kiwa Initiative Secretariat, Direction de l'Agriculture, de la Forêt et de l'Environnement (DAFE), Ecological Transition Agency/ ADEME, Office Français de la Biodiversité (OFB), representatives of the local communities are also involved.

AFD Regional Director for the Pacific, Mrs. Virginie Bleitrach said, "I would like to warmly thank SPREP for the preparation of this Country Steering Committee and for all the work undertaken to launch this project, both at the regional level and in New Caledonia. I am convinced of the demonstration potential of this type of project, which is actually quite rare in the region, so I wish all the partners every success in its implementation."

PEBACC+ is a €5.8 million regional project implemented by SPREP and funded by the Kiwa Initiative through its donors the European Union, AFD, Global Affairs Canada, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), with co-financing from FFEM. This four-year project seeks to strengthen the resilience of ecosystems, economies, and communities to the impacts of climate change in Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna. The project will develop, sustain, and institutionalise Ecosystem-based Adaptation to climate change in these five countries and territories.

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*Photo of the first Country Steering Committee of the PEBACC+ regional project of the Kiwa Initiative for the launch in New Caledonia, Thursday, October 12, 2023. S.TAVANABOLA © SPREP – Oct 2023*

**About the Kiwa Initiative** - The Kiwa Initiative – Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) for Climate Resilience aims to strengthen the climate resilience of Pacific Island ecosystems, communities and economies through NBS by protecting, sustainably managing and restoring biodiversity. It is based on simplified access to climate change adaptation and biodiversity conservation finance for local and national authorities, civil society and regional organisations in Pacific Island countries and territories. The Initiative is funded by the European Union, Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the New Zealand Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). It has established partnerships with the Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Oceania Regional Office of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). For more information: [www.kiwainitiative.org](http://www.kiwainitiative.org)

**About SPREP** – The Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) is the main intergovernmental organisation mandated to promote cooperation in the Pacific region, to assist in the protection and enhancement of its environment, and to ensure and sustain its sustainable development for present and future generations. For more information: [www.sprep.org](http://www.sprep.org)

**About the FFEM** – The French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) is a promoter of innovation in favor of environmental protection and sustainable socio-economic development in developing countries. Created in 1994 by the French government following the first Earth Summit, it has already supported more than 350 projects in more than 120 countries, two-thirds of which are in Africa. For more information: [www.ffem.fr](http://www.ffem.fr)

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