

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024 - 2026



Nature Yetu

Be bold. Be a voice. Be a hummingbird



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Foreward

Nature Yetu traces back its origin to an idea in 2017. It was set to be an NGO that covers Mauritius and Eastern Africa. The primary interest was to work on environmental education and digital storytelling. However, executing that original idea and vision has not been an easy process. From figuring out the administrative requirements, navigating diverging ideas, to building a team, developing and executing projects, it has all been a bumpy road. But Nature Yetu would not be what it is without this journey and the lessons learned.

This strategy only provides a glimpse of what the NGO is now about. Our new focus on advocating for and supporting evidence-based conservation and the priorities laid out to support this goal is really the result of passionate, like-minded people and critical thinkers coming together. While our background and experiences differ, we share a common outlook on the conservation field particularly within the Mauritian context.

Many challenges persist in the country that is preventing us from achieving essential conservation targets. The team could indeed have spent days trying to map and dissect the conservation challenges summarised on page 8. It all stems from our own experiences, observations and shaped by our understanding that letting evidence guide decision making and practice is the only way forward if we want to make progress on biodiversity outcomes.

This is what we are committing ourselves to with this strategy: the most important thing is not to do more but to do better.



Fabiola Monty
Co-Founder and Vice-President
Nature Yetu

About Nature Yetu

Nature Yetu is a Mauritian NGO created in 2019 (Registration number 16175) that is comprised mostly of biodiversity specialists as well as researchers. The organization's mission is to inform, inspire and empower people to advocate for, support and act for the protection of nature.

NGO Motto: "Be bold. Be a voice. Be a hummingbird"

Vision: That conservation initiatives are increasingly designed and guided by science to effectively provide positive outcomes for biodiversity and people.

NGO objectives:

1. Disseminate knowledge and increase awareness on nature, its importance and environmental challenges
2. Popularise conservation science in the region (Western Indian Ocean)
3. Develop and provide tools for effective environmental education
4. Inspire actions to protect and conserve nature
5. Support engagement in biodiversity conservation

Why "Nature Yetu"?



The name "Nature Yetu" is a combination of English and Swahili which can be translated as "our nature". The name and slogan, "Be bold. Be a voice. Be a hummingbird" is a direct homage to Wangari Maathai who was a Kenyan environmental activist and the first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004.

Governance and capacity

Nature Yetu is comprised of 15 members (nine women and six men) with 80% of the members working in the environmental / conservation field. The NGO currently relies on volunteer work by a core group of nine members.

The Managing committee

In alignment with Mauritian legislation, Nature Yetu is administered by a Managing Committee composed of :

1. President: Dr Cláudia Baider
2. Vice-President: Ms Fabiola Monty
3. Secretary: Dr Prishnee Bissessur
4. Assistant Secretary: Mr Raphael Merven
5. Treasurer: Mrs Crystele Allam
6. Assistant Treasurer: Ms Tavinia Naiken

Members:

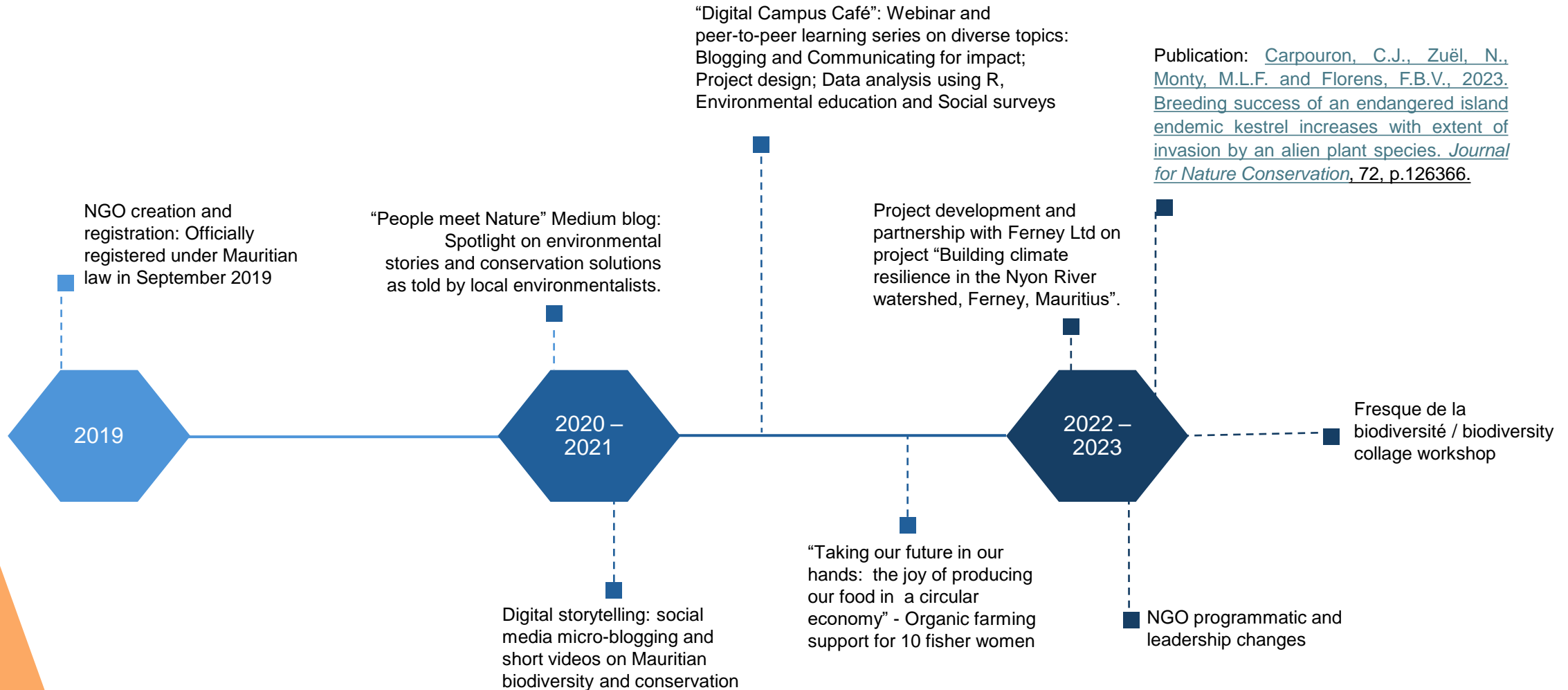
1. Dr F. B. Vincent Florens – Founding member
2. Mr M. Imthiaz Z. A. Sheik Abbass – Founding member

3. Mr Nicolas Monty – Founding member
4. Mr Erwin Jayson Amavassee – Founding member
5. Mrs Puspha Seepaul– Founding member
6. Mr Vashist Seegobin – Member
7. Ms Joanne Carpouon– Member
8. Ms Yogishah Bunsy – Member
9. Ms Jayaneesh Namah – Member

Core technical team and area of expertise

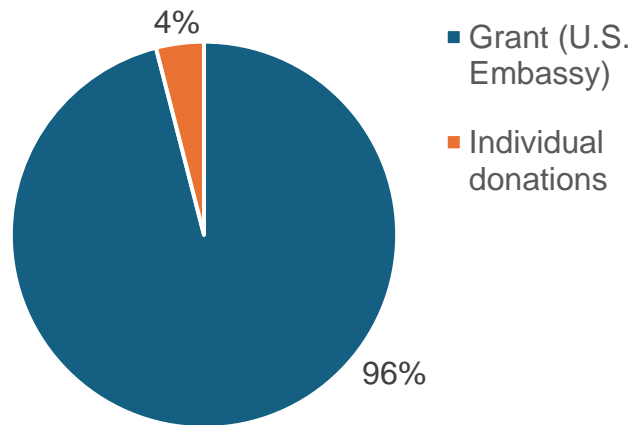
Name	Area of expertise
Cláudia Baider	Tropical ecology; Botany
F. B. Vincent Florens	Biodiversity conservation; Ecology
Fabiola Monty	Participatory ecosystem governance; Nature-based Solutions
Jayaneesh Namah	Plant-animal interactions; Forest restoration
Tavinia Naiken	Media theory & communications; Environmental Sociology
Imthiaz Z. A. Sheik Abbass	Species distribution modelling; GIS spatial analysis
Prishnee Bissessur	Agrobiodiversity; Impacts of invasive alien species
Raphael Merven	Socio-ecological governance; Environmental management
Yogishah Bunsy	Bat ecology; Ecosystem restoration

Overview of activities: 2019 -2023



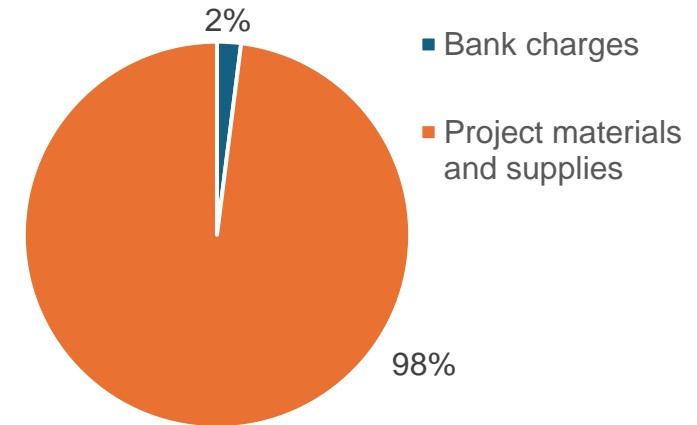
Financial overview: 2020 - 2023

Income



Total income = Rs 118,237

Expenses



Total expenses = Rs 117, 579

In-kind contributions (Members' contributed time, communication softwares and website domain and maintenance) for the years 2020- 2023 is estimated at around Rs 400,000.

Ongoing projects and partners



Photo: Fabiola Monty / Nature Yetu

'Fresque de la biodiversité (Biodiversity collage)

The Nature Yetu team leads the implementation of the 'fresque de la biodiversité' in Mauritius targeting a diverse audience including participants from the private sector. The fresk also known as Biodiversity collage is 3-hour interactive workshop using a set of cards and increase awareness and knowledge on the following topics:

1. The meaning of biodiversity
2. The importance of biodiversity for human well-being
3. Causes of biodiversity loss
4. Consequences of biodiversity loss

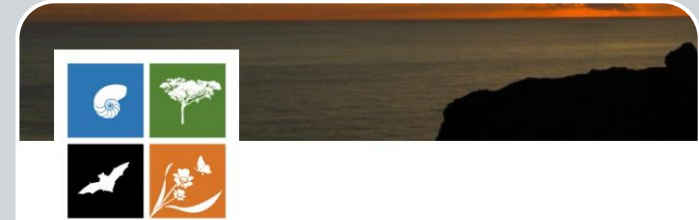


Photo: Xavier Koenig / Ferney Ltd

Building climate resilience in the Nyon River watershed, Ferney, Mauritius

This project seeks to build socio-ecological resilience in the Nyon river watershed and Bamboo Mountain Range Key Biodiversity Area through ecosystem restoration and climate-smart agriculture and is led by Ferney Ltd and funded by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF). Nature Yetu team provides technical advice and support to the following activities of the project:

- Applying evidence-based approaches for native forest restoration
- Monitoring and evaluation of ecosystem-based adaptation
- Knowledge dissemination (guided walk, workshops, videos)



The ECHO Platform

Evidence-based Conservation, Heuristics and Outreach (ECHO)

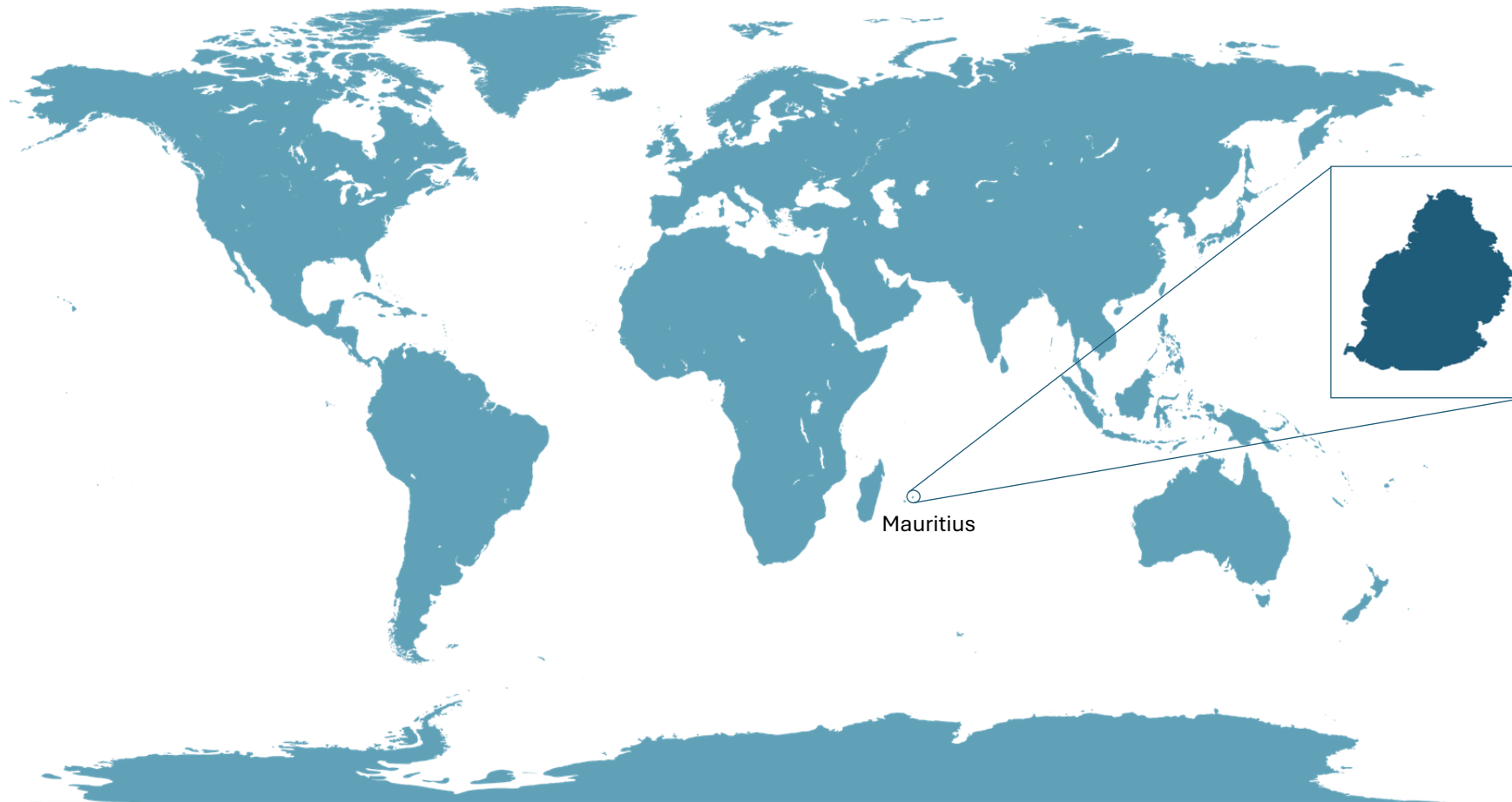
Evidence-based Conservation, Heuristics and Outreach (ECHO)

ECHO is a joint platform of Mauritian NGO Nature Yetu and the Tropical Island Biodiversity, Ecology and Conservation (TIBEC) Pole of Research of the University of Mauritius. It has the following objectives:

1. Promote evidence-based conservation
2. Showcase best practices for ecosystem restoration and nature-based solutions
3. Increase awareness on research and the implications for conservation practice
4. Highlight researchers working to inform conservation practice in the region
5. Increase awareness on Mauritian native biodiversity & the extinction of local experiences with nature and native biodiversity

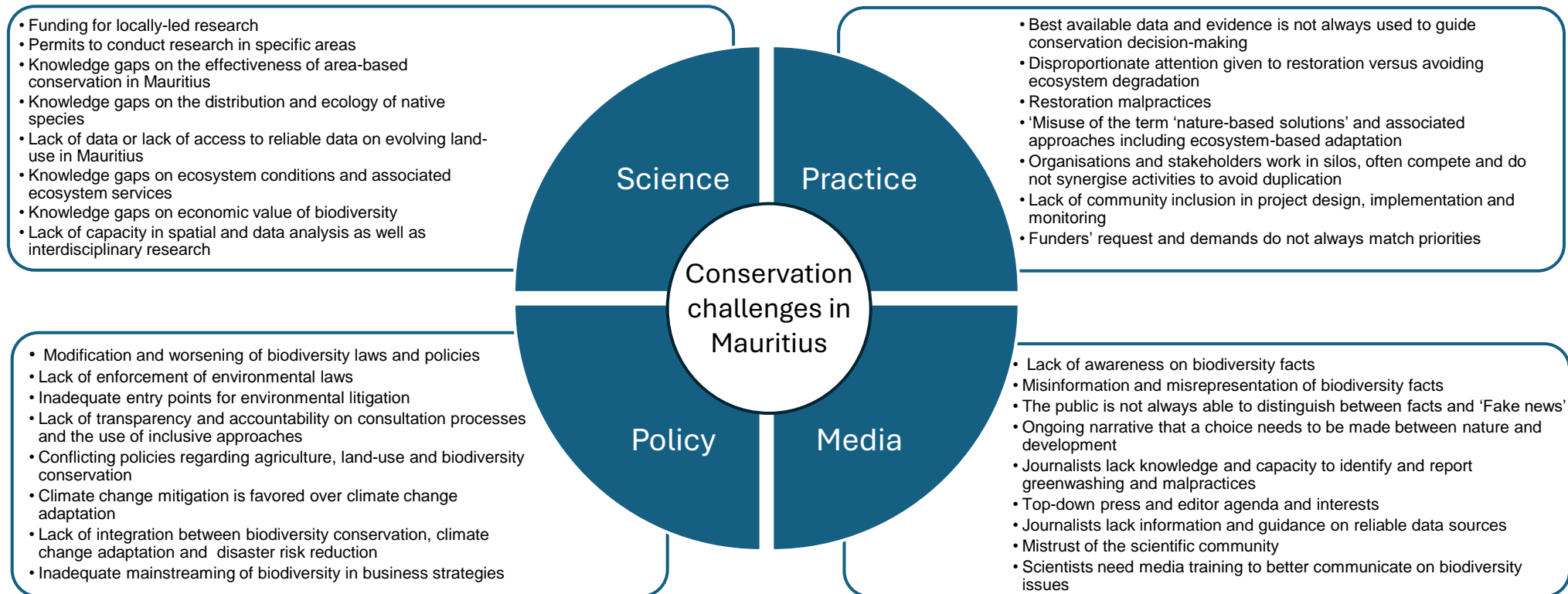
Geographical focus

Nature Yetu's work is primarily focused on the island of Mauritius which is part of the Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot. However, it is expected that some activities and knowledge products can be relevant for a wider audience across the African continent.



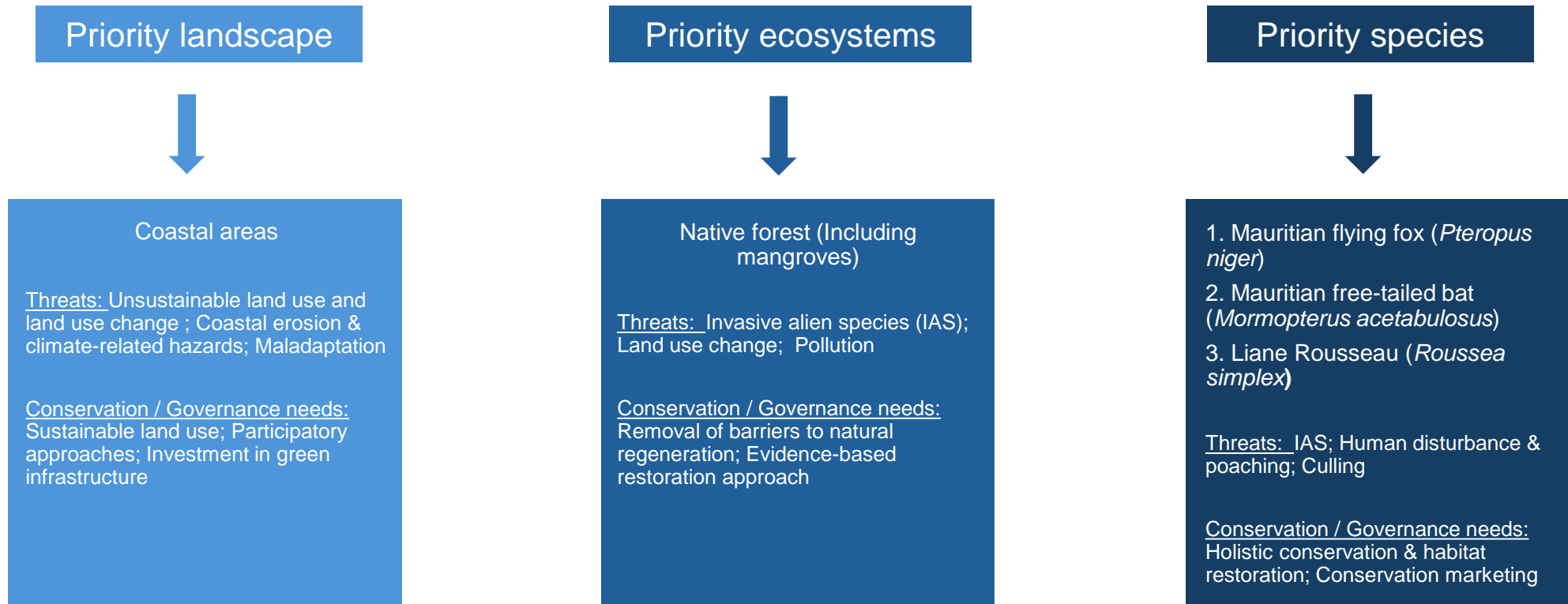
Conservation challenges: Mauritius

With regards to Mauritius, some major challenges have been identified when it comes to biodiversity conservation:



Biodiversity focus

Mauritius has an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) covering 2.3 million km² which is more than 1000 times the size of its land area. With land being a limiting resource and with conflicting public policies, terrestrial biodiversity can easily be disregarded amidst growing interest for urbanization, development of transport infrastructure and a booming real estate economic sector. While it will not be exclusive to it, Nature Yetu's work will prioritise terrestrial biodiversity and focus on three components simultaneously:



Priorities: 2024 - 2026

Priority 1: NGO capacity and sustainability

- Team development and team building
- Internal capacity assessment and capacity building
- Develop and apply internal policies that contribute to transparency, accountability, sustainability and DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) within the organisation
- Fundraising and recruitment of paid staff
- Increase visibility and credibility
- Partnership and collaboration scoping
- Establish partnership agreements with key stakeholders

Priority 2: Programme development

- Develop project portfolios under one or more of these three pillars:
 1. Environmental communication
 2. Capacity Building
 3. Research
- Maintain a database of grants and funding opportunities
- Maintain a database of project ideas
- Strategic fundraising: Target grants that align with the NGO's project goals (versus developing projects to fit funders' requirements)
- Develop and apply a robust Monitoring and Evaluation framework for impact evaluation

Programme Pillar 1 : Environmental communication



Environmental communication: It is understood to not only be the transmission of information and knowledge but to also be a “joint construction of meaning through the social negotiation of knowledge, emotions, values, relationships and embodied experiences related to environmental and sustainability issues”¹

Expected results:

- Enhanced understanding about biodiversity, ecosystem services, causes of biodiversity loss and degradation and actions to take
- Researchers and practitioners are more aware of the global, regional and national policies shaping biodiversity conservation and natural resources management at national level
- Practitioners and decision-makers are sensitized to the importance of adopting evidence-based approaches for conservation
- Increased knowledge on ongoing research in Mauritius and the researchers leading the work
- Increased knowledge on the outcomes and recommendation of scientific publications relevant for Mauritian biodiversity governance

Activities	Tools	Main target audience
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social media content & micro-blogging 2. Educational sessions / workshops 3. Blogging 4. Media articles 5. Videos 6. Technical notes 7. Webinars 8. Participation in media programmes (TV & Radio) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media platforms • Environmental games • Medium blog “<i>People meet Nature</i>” • Webinar software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School children (6 -18) • Practitioners (Public, Private, NGO) • Decision makers (Public, Private) • Journalists

¹Fischer, A., Joosse, S., Hallgren, L. and Westberg, L., 2024. How research on communication can help to understand the management of natural resources and sustainability transformations: practices, concerns and new perspectives on environmental communication. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 67(9), pp.1871-1885.

Programme Pillar 2 : Capacity Building



Capacity Building: It is understood to be the process through which individuals and organisations obtain, strengthen and maintain knowledge and skills on specific topics and tools.

Expected results:

- Capacity needs for Nature Yetu team and Mauritian youth engaged on environmental and sustainability issues are evaluated
- Mauritian / Mauritius-based researchers have access to technical advice for data analysis and interdisciplinary research
- Enhanced understanding of best practices for forest restoration among practitioners
- Enhanced understanding on the design, implementation and monitoring of Nature-based Solutions for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction
- Enhanced capacity of researchers and practitioners on ecosystem services assessment
- Capacity of journalists and scientists to communicate on biodiversity is enhanced

Activities	Tools	Main target audience
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Workshops2. Webinars3. Individual / Group coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training curriculums• Webinar software• R software• GIS software	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Youth (Aged 18-35)• Mauritian / Mauritius-based researchers• Practitioners (Public, Private, NGO)• Journalists

Programme Pillar 3 : Research



Research: This includes all type of studies and investigations including surveys and field research as well as on-site conservation measures as these will also integrate rigorous methods for impact evaluation

Expected results:

- Local knowledge, attitude towards and perceptions about Mauritian biodiversity is better understood
- Biodiversity narratives by media is explored
- The impact of biodiversity legislation is assessed
- Contribution to knowledge on the impacts of ecosystem restoration
- Knowledge gaps and inaccurate communication regarding terrestrial ecosystems are explored
- Opportunities to map ecosystem services are explored
- Assessment of business engagement on biodiversity
- Evaluation tools to assess the impact of educational /sensitization activities are developed and tested
- Ongoing collaboration with the Tropical Island Biodiversity, Ecology and Conservation (TIBEC) pole of research of the University of Mauritius is strengthened
- New partnerships with research institutions outside of Mauritius are identified and established

Activities	Tools	Main target audience
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Online surveys 2. Social research (surveys, focus groups, participatory video) 3. Media content analysis 4. Policy and discourse analysis 5. Ecological surveys 6. Restoration pilot sites 7. Support MSc / PhD theses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R software • GIS software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature Yetu Team • Mauritian / Mauritius-based researchers • Practitioners (Public, Private, NGO) • Decision makers (Public, Private) • Local community





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