European Network for Rural Development

Fighting against soil erosion in Mayotte (LESELAM)

EAFRD-funded projects

A cooperation project brought together local farmers, inhabitants and public services managers to jointly define and promote soil preservation technics adapted to the local environment.

FRANCE

Implementing cooperation projects

Location
Mayotte

Programming period
2014 - 2020

Priority
P4 Ecosystems management

Measure
M16 Cooperation (16.5)

Funding (EUR)
Total budget 1 124 156
EAFRD 489 814
National/regional 245 777
Other 388 565

Project duration
2015 – 2017

Project promoter
BRGM (private consultancy, project coordinator)

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www.linfokwezi.fr/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Information-publique-sur-le-projet-LESELAM.pdf

www.youtube.com/watch?v=RFQXHCZfQE8

Summary

The French overseas' island of Mayotte is confronted with significant soil erosion problems. Contributing factors apart from environmental conditions like high slopes, intensive rainfalls, etc., are the demographic explosion and consequent urban expansion, as well as harmful agricultural practices (slash and burn).


Stakeholders workshop May 2016 © BRGM-CAPAM

This project aims at involving local stakeholders in defining and implementing farming practices that limit soil erosion. The 3 years project includes 3 majors steps. During the first step an automatic hydro-meteorological and sediment concentration network on 3 pilot catchment areas was established. The second step concerns communication and information activities targeting farmers, inhabitants and managers of public services in catchment areas. The third and last phase concerns the implementation, monitoring and participatory assessment of pilot actions on demonstrations plots based on landscape and soil conservation techniques identified during the workshops with local stakeholders.

Results

- Established 3 water and sediment monitoring stations
- One farm plot equipped with monitoring station
- Organised 7 local workshops
- Between 10 to 20 participants per workshop
- 10 farmers participated to pilot actions
- 2 'external' communications activities carried out (schools, etc.)
- 8 advertising panels set up

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ During workshops, discussions among farmers were not so much about innovative techniques, but more about sharing practice that already exists locally. The main interest for the local stakeholders was to understand the soil erosion principles and get the confirmation that these farming techniques do not require additional manpower and can be implemented immediately.
- ❑ The most challenging part of this type of project is to resolve land issues where monitoring stations are being built.

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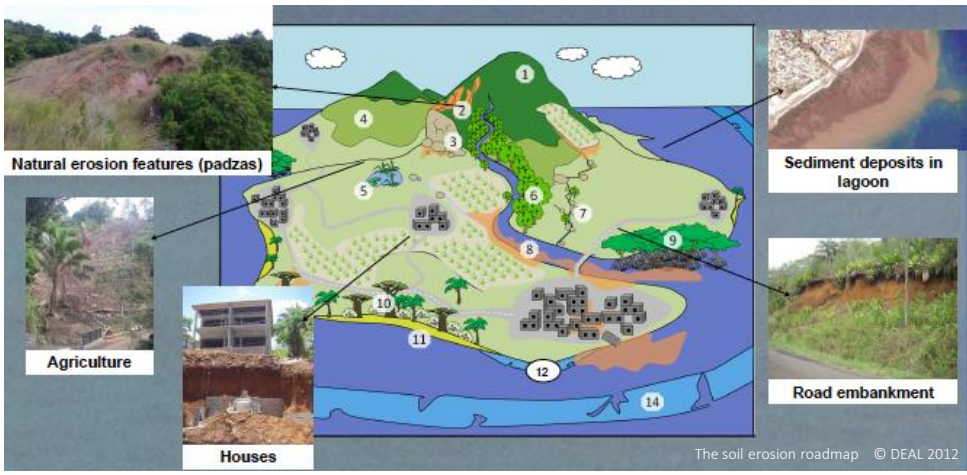
Context

Mayotte is a French overseas' island located in the Comoros archipelago, between Madagascar and Mozambique. Its terrestrial ecosystem with erodible ferrallitic soils and many areas with slopes over 15 % is undermined by intensive and aggressive rainfall patterns. It is also under pressure from the demographic explosion with social and environmental consequences, such as deforestation (30ha of forests disappear per year) and mangrove cutting, uncontrolled agricultural practices (slash and burn) with soil depletion and crop yield decrease, unplanned urban sprawl (spontaneous and uncontrolled townships housing) with high landslide and mud flow hazards.



The soil erosion roadmap © DEAL 2012

Objectives

This project is included in the roadmap for fighting against soil erosion in Mayotte. It aims at involving local stakeholders in a concerted approach to define and implement farming practice and preservation techniques that limit soil erosion on agricultural, natural and rural land. Specific objectives defined by the project partners include:

- Setting up a soil erosion Observatory;
- Setting up a good practice demonstrator;
- Structuring joint actions and raising the local community awareness through communication and training of local stakeholders.

Activities

The 3 years project includes 3 majors steps:

Step 1: Implementation of an automatic hydro-meteorological and sediment concentration network on 3 pilot catchment areas;

Step 2: Communication and information sharing through public meetings and local workshops, targeting farmers and referent farmers for sustainable agriculture on one hand and inhabitants and managers of publics services catchment areas on the other;

Step 3: Implementation, monitoring and participatory assessment of pilot actions (demonstrations plots) based on landscape and soil conservation techniques identified during local workshops.

Main results

The output indicators for the first year were very successful. The from farmers and local communities was very high with more people attending information sessions and workshops than expected. Some key results achieved, include:

- Number of water and sediment monitoring stations established: 3 (2017 target: 4)
- Number of farm plots equipped with monitoring stations: 1 (2017 target: 12)
- Number of local workshops organised: 7 (2017 target: 16)
- Number of workshop participants: 10-20 per workshop (2017 target: 10)
- Number of farmers participating to pilot actions: 10 (2017 target: 10)
- Number of 'external' communications (schools, etc.): 2 (2017 target: 10)
- Number of advertising panels: 8 (2017 target: 15)

Lessons

During workshops, discussions among farmers were not so much about innovative techniques, but more about sharing practice that already exists locally. The main interest for the local stakeholders was to understand the soil erosion principles and get the confirmation that these farming techniques do not require additional manpower and can be implemented immediately.

The most challenging part of this type of project is to resolve land issues where monitoring stations are being built.