



## GEF-Satoyama Subgrantee Highlights Report

Organization Name:	EPCO
Country:	Mauritius
Reporting Quarter:	FY18 Q3 (January to March 2018)
Person submitting Report:	Estelle DEJA

<Highlight 1>: **Meetings with cooperative members.**

Meetings with cooperative members are constant and continuous in order to plan and design management activities and resolve conflicts in a collaborative manner. Four meetings were conducted during the Quarter 3 (Q3). The meetings were held in The Barachois Project office and in the Social welfare centre of Residences La Chaux on January 24<sup>th</sup>, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, March 15<sup>th</sup> and March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018. A total of 23 Local residents participated to the meetings including 9 women and 14 men.



Meetings with local residents in Residences La Chaux, Mahebourg @ EPCO / Camille DEHU (Visitor)

<Highlight 2>: IAS removal and control

The IAS removal and control programme is ongoing and was conducted between January 8<sup>th</sup> and March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018. A total of 95 half days / man were carried out during the quarter 3 (Q3). The programme mainly consisted in removing roots of the four main IAS species that were initially targeted. The programme was conducted by local residents with the help of two interns from the University of Reunion Island.



IAS removal and control by local residents in the coastal wetland @ EPCO / Estelle DEJA

<Highlight 3>: **Quadrat installation**

Two quadrats of 5 metres square have been set-up using strawberry guava wood by two interns from the University of Reunion Island and a local resident of Residences La Chaux who used to work for 20 years in forest restoration and conservation. The coastal wetland has been divided into 12 zones in order to facilitate the weeding planning and the monitoring programme. It has been decided that two quadrats will set-up by zone for the monitoring programme. As a result, 24 quadrats will be established in the project zone.



Quadrats installation by two intern students from the University of Reunion Island @ EPCO / Estelle DEJA

<Highlight 4>: **Welcoming the delegation from Seychelles**

The SIDS Youth AIMS Hub (SYAH) Seychelles is the local chapter of a regional organization aimed at advancing youth-led projects in the area of sustainable development. The Blue Economy internship is a programme for Seychellois youth to take up an interest in the blue economy sector. The EPCO team welcomed 15 interns who were selected from a group of over 30 other youth. During their 8-day trip in Mauritius, they came to the project site to learn about the project and enhance their knowledge of the blue economy sector from a regional point of view.



Interns from SYAH Seychelles visiting the marine coastal wetland @ EPCO / Anael Bodwell.

<Highlight 5> **Endemic and native terrestrial plant species planting, watering and monitoring**

The first endemic and native species that the team planted out in the coastal wetland came from the Nursery of Ile aux Aigrettes island. The plants were donated by the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) in August, 2017. The plants located in the quadrats will be subject to a constant monitoring programme to evaluate their adaptation and growth in the zone.



<Highlight 6>: Walking tracks rehabilitation

The renovation of the walking tracks has started during the quarter 3 along with the conduction of the IAS removal and control programme. The tracks have been created using existing volcanic rocks that have been collected to facilitate the planting programme. Two tracks have been made with a length of 40 metres and 60 metres respectively. The walking tracks will be rehabilitated continuously along with the IAS removal and control programme. All the tracks in the coastal wetland have already been designed through consultation strategies with local residents, including observational walks.



<Highlight 7>: Access Road Renovation

The renovation of the main access road is almost completed and consists in road's side consolidation and road filling. Its advancement depends on local companies which drop materials on a voluntary basis. A total of 24 half days / man were conducted during the quarter 3. The team is awaiting trucks from the Beau Vallon Company which will drop mixed earth and mud on site in order to complete the road renovation.



<Highlight 8>: Community-based events

Following to a meeting with the cooperative' s members, it has been decided in a collaborative manner that the cutting and planting processes of the restoration programme will be made by local residents on a voluntary basis through the conduction of community-based events. Indeed, every two weeks the members will organize a one-day event to conduct these activities. As a result, two events have been organized on March 4<sup>th</sup> and March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 with 8 and 11 participants respectively.



Pictures of the targeted zone after the community-based event in the coastal wetland @ EPCO / Estelle DEJA

<Highlight 9>: **Acquisition of endemic and native plant species**

The EPCO team has requested to the National Parks and Conservation Service (Ministry of Agro Industry and Food security) endemic and native plant species in order to revegetate the coastal wetland as part of the restoration programme. Following to this request, two site visits were organized with the Director of the Forestry Department and an officer of the National Park and Conservation Services to provide information regarding the zone and the project activities. On March 22, 2018, the team received a letter stating that the forestry services has made available to the EPCO team, 420 native and endemic plants, free of charge, under the “National Tree Planting Campaign. In this context, 420 plants from 19 different species will be collected from the Tree Seed Centre and planted out in the coastal forest during the Quarter 4 (Q4).

<Highlight 10>: **Internship programme**

Two interns from the University of Reunion Island came over a period of three weeks in order to help the local residents with the IAS removal and control programme as well as the walking tracks rehabilitation. They worked every day between 6 and 11 am under the supervision of the Project Manager.

Moreover, following to a meeting with 3 representatives of AIESEC, 30 interns will come to help the local residents in conducting project activities over a period of 3 months, between June and July, 2018. Indeed, two groups of fifteen volunteers will come for period of one and half month.