



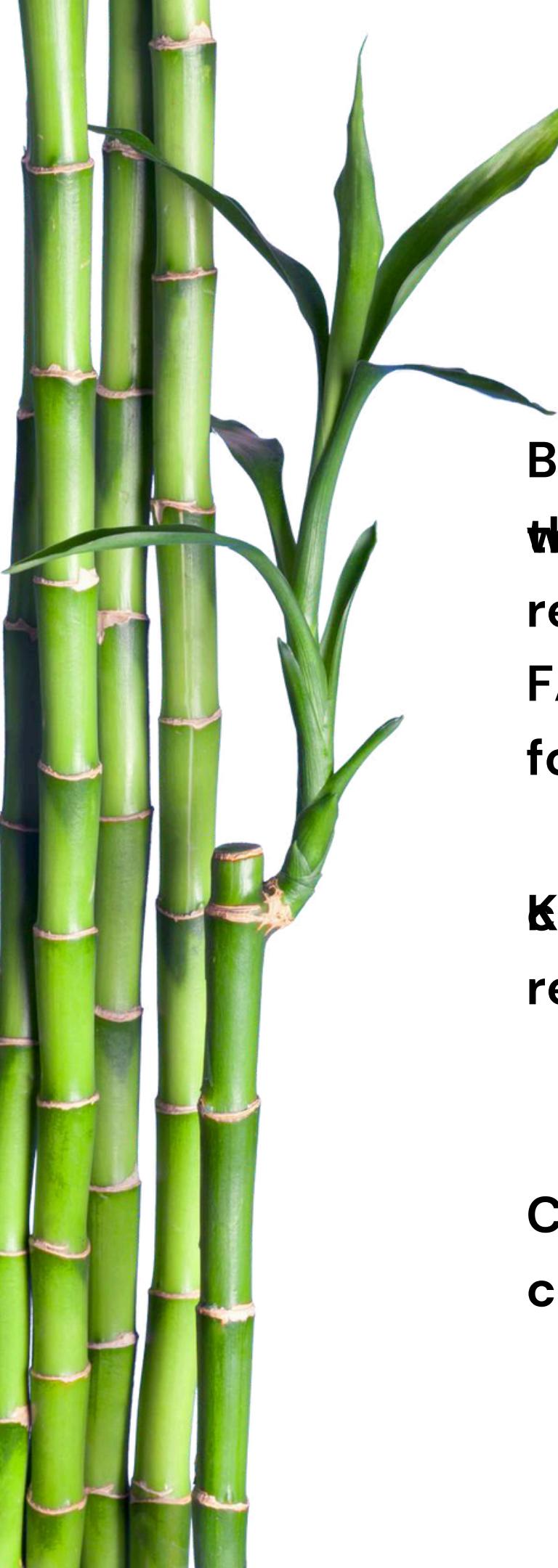
## PROFILE PRESENTATION

# **INTRODUCTION**

**Associação dos Amigos do Bambu (ASSAMBA)** stands for 'Bamboo Friends Association' in portuguese. We are a Mozambican non-profit organization that promotes de cultivation and environmental, commercial and industrial sustainable use of bamboo.

Our goal is to build a solid foundation that enables a social and economic environment where bamboo takes on a central role in providing essential ecosystem services such as erosion control, water purification, and carbon capture while supporting sustainable and inclusive development.

In this document, we present our motivations, plans, strategies and on-going projects.



# **CURRENT BAMBOO SCENARIO IN MOZAMBIQUE**

Bamboo is a highly versatile natural resource that is increasingly relevant ~~while it is still the information~~ about its occurrence in Mozambique. According to a report from the Ministry of Land, Environment, and Rural Development and the FAO in 2018, the occurrence of bamboo is not even mentioned in the national forest inventories.

~~Knowledge, logistics, silvicultural investments, management of sustainable exploitation, regeneration, propagation, transformation, and market~~ is limited.

Consequently, bamboo is an underutilized resource, except for traditional construction, handicrafts, household items, and local limited use.



# CURRENT BAMBOO SCENARIO IN MOZAMBIQUE

Despite limited information, it is known that:

- 8 bamboo species have been recorded in Mozambique so far:
  - Native species: *O. Latifolia*, *O. buchwaldii*, *O. abyssinica*.
  - Introduced species: *B. Bambos*, *Vulgaris*, *Balcoa*, *Hamiltonni*, *D. Strictus*.
- Covered area: 11,604 hectares.
- Applications: construction, energy, furniture, and handicrafts.
- In 2005, Mozambique became a member of the International Bamboo and Rattan Organization (INBAR).



# **CURRENT BAMBOO SCENARIO IN MOZAMBIQUE**

**Furthermore, it is known that there is a greater availability of bamboo in the northern part of the country, a region facing not only extreme weather events but also a severe humanitarian crisis that has led to large numbers of displaced people in the past years.**

**To address this crisis, bamboo has been increasingly used as an effective and low-cost solution for construction, putting significant pressure on existing bamboo stocks.**

**This situation is concerning, and in discussions with experts in the field, there are already reports of difficulties in finding bamboo in some northern regions. This highlights the importance of applying appropriate management strategies to ensure the sustainability of bamboo resources.**

# ASSAMBA'S MISSION

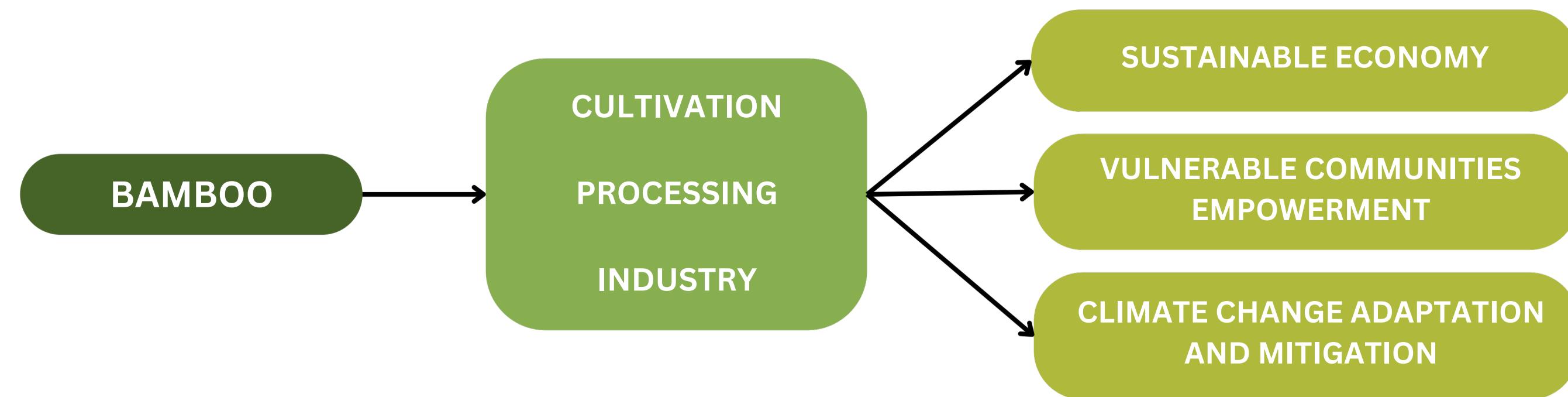
We aim to empower individuals and communities with the knowledge and skills needed to cultivate and harness bamboo effectively and sustainably. To achieve this vision, our mission is to promote bamboo as a highly renewable and sustainable resource capable of meeting environmental, economic, social, and cultural needs. Our approach is built on three pillars:

- 1. Education:** We believe in the transformative power of knowledge. Our educational initiatives are designed to enlighten people about the potential of bamboo, from its sustainable growth to its numerous uses. We aim to raise awareness among the general population, the market, and government institutions.
- 2. Training:** Education alone is not enough. Therefore, we provide practical training to individuals and organizations interested in bamboo cultivation and its environmental, commercial, or industrial applications. This is a critical focus for us because it ensures that the potential of bamboo is realized in practice.
- 3. Research:** We are committed to advancing the scientific understanding of bamboo and exploring new possibilities and applications for this resource. Our goal is to ensure that bamboo becomes a cornerstone of sustainable development in Mozambique.



# ASSAMBA'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE

ASSAMBA plans to be a catalyst to unlock the full potential of bamboo in Mozambique, creating an ecosystem where the cultivation, processing, and industrial use of bamboo pave the way to an inclusive and sustainable economy. This initiative aims to empower vulnerable rural communities, regenerate the environment, mitigate and adapt to climate change, and consolidate ecological and sustainable practices.





# **ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE**

# ASSAMBA'S FARM

In our **3-hectares farm**, we are currently cultivating **2000 bamboo plants of 9 different species**, carefully selected for their unique qualities and applications. We are also implementing **intercropping practices**, promoting biodiversity and enhancing the overall ecological balance of the farm. Furthermore, our nursery can produce **2000 seedlings** every 6 months. This facility plays a crucial role in supporting the growth and expansion of our bamboo cultivation initiatives, ensuring a continuous and sustainable supply.



# PACJA FUNDING



We secured a 15 thousand euro grant from the Climate Justice and Resilience Facility for Africa Cohort, part of the Pan African Alliance for Climate Justice. This grant will fuel a groundbreaking project aimed at supporting the **charcoal** industry in the south of Mozambique with the following goals:

- **Enhance and expand our nursery** to produce 12,000 seedlings every 6months
- **Train 40 farmers and charcoal producers** in bamboo cultivation and biochar production
- **Expand bamboo crops** by cultivating 10 hectares
- **Generate employment opportunities:** 4 permanent positions and 49 seasonal
- **Produce, pack, and distribute 1.5 tons of Charcoal** for quality testing and outreach

This project represents a crucial step towards sustainable practices, economic growth, and the promotion of eco-friendly solutions in the region. These initiatives align with our commitment to environmental stewardship and community development.

# 1st INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ASSAMBA

In October 2023, we organized our 1st International Seminar. With over 100 participants, this groundbreaking and inclusive event featured bamboo experts and enthusiasts from different countries, university students and representatives from local communities, government institutions, humanitarian aid agencies and the private sector.



# 1st INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ASSAMBA

The event featured:

- Lectures: Meaningful knowledge and experience exchange
- Practical workshops on various themes:
  - Bamboo Cultivation and Management
  - Charcoal and Biochar Production
  - Bamboo Shoots for a Healthy Diet
  - Bamboo Furniture and Handicraft Production
  - Bamboo Construction
- Open exhibition: presenting the workshops' outcomes to the broader community.

This international seminar marked a pivotal moment in our journey, fostering global collaboration and advancing a collective understanding of bamboo's diverse applications and sustainable practices.



# MoU WITH APAM: LAND RESTORATION PROJECT

We established a Memorandum of Understanding with the Maputo Environmental Protection Area Authority (APAM) to implement a **pilot project to restore 12 hectares of degraded land** through the creation of a bamboo and endemic species forest. This project aims to:

- Plant 4,000 bamboo seedlings, and 1600 endemic plants, fostering a resilient ecosystem and a functional mixed forest.
- Restore soil integrity, enhance biodiversity, and create a natural barrier against erosion.
- Generate employment and learning opportunities in forest management and sintropic agriculture.
- Empower and engage local communities.
- Explore the economic potential of bamboo, laying the foundation for the local bamboo product industry.



This strategic partnership signifies our commitment to environmental restoration, community empowerment, and the sustainable economic development of the region.



# DISASTER RESILIENT SOCIAL HOUSING INITIATIVE

In collaboration with several stakeholders such as INGD, Casa Congo, Jaime Peña Studio, Ayuda en Acción and Xi Bassile, we are designing a project for Disaster Resilient Bamboo Social Housing. Inspired by the KUNA project, implemented by Casa Congo in Nicaragua, we aim to address the housing deficit and empower vulnerable communities in Mozambique by

- **Developing, testing and building low-cost, disaster-resilient houses using bamboo and other bioconstruction materials.**
- **Establish a holistic social and economic ecosystem, enabling a bamboo value chain.**

The project encompasses 3 phases:

1. **Prototyping:** Test and refine 4 culturally adapted low-cost housing typologies
2. **Pilot Project Implementation:** Based on successful prototypes, build resilient houses to benefit a targeted community in a restricted area.
3. **Scaling Up:** Extend the solution to address the broader housing deficit in Mozambique, leveraging lessons learned from the pilot.





# **PLANS FOR THE FUTURE**

# RESEARCH AND EDUCATION CENTER

As we plan for a future where bamboo occupies a pivotal role in inclusive and sustainable development, we also aim to **build our research and education centre**, a hub for our activities and a driving force for the implementation and promotion of bamboo culture in Mozambique.

With the support of bamboo-focused architect Jaime Peña, this centre will be designed through a **participatory consultation and co-design process** involving the local community of Ponta do Ouro.

This infrastructure will have training rooms, a laboratory, a conference hall, dining facilities, and dormitories for students and trainers.



# RESEARCH AND EDUCATION CENTER



Our goal is to create a complete infrastructure, employing **bio-construction techniques** that utilize bamboo, earth, and ecologically sound practices with minimal environmental impact.

This facility will not only support our activities but will also serve as a new paradigm, showcasing what is achievable with eco-friendly materials and techniques.

The ASSAMBA Research Centre represents a commitment to **sustainable architecture, environmental education, and community collaboration**. It stands as a testament to what can be achieved when embracing eco-conscious materials and techniques, paving the way for a greener and more resilient future in Mozambique.





# RESEARCH TO BE DEVELOPED

ASSAMBA is committed to conducting cutting-edge research that will advance and consolidate a sustainable bamboo industry in Mozambique. Our future research initiatives include:

- 1. Mapping Bamboo Stocks:** Comprehensive survey of existing bamboo resources to better understand their distribution and abundance across Mozambique.
- 2. Species Adaptation for Mozambican Climates:** Identifying bamboo species that thrive in Mozambican climates and environmental conditions, ensuring suitability for cultivation.
- 3. Properties of Adaptable Bamboo Species:** Examining the specific properties of bamboo species that demonstrate resilience and adaptation to local conditions.
- 4. Optimal Uses for Bamboo Species:** Determining the most effective applications for different bamboo species, including ecosystem services provision and their suitability for biochar production, construction, textile production, and other innovative uses.
- 5. Economic Viability:** Assessing the economic potential of bamboo species for local industries, exploring avenues for sustainable economic growth.
- 6. Bamboo in Climate Change Mitigation:** Exploring the role of bamboo in climate change mitigation, particularly in carbon sequestration and environmental restoration.
- 7. Community Impact:** Evaluating the social and economic impact of bamboo cultivation on local communities, including job creation and empowerment.



**JOIN US ON THIS JOURNEY OF BUILDING  
A MORE INCLUSIVE, RESILIENT, AND  
SUSTAINABLE MOZAMBIQUE!  
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