# [***Mangroves against climate change; Coastal protection improves the global CO2 balance***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65D9-TM01-JBK9-2390-00000-00&context=1516831)

Die Welt (English)

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African countries are increasingly turning to ***mangroves*** to protect their coasts from climate change. With projects to restore these ecosystems, they also hope to attract investors. Mozambique, as well as Kenya, Madagascar, The Gambia and Senegal, are now active in a large-scale ***mangrove*** initiative.

Mozambique is touting the world's largest project to sequester carbon in marine ecosystems. By absorbing so-called ***blue carbon***, these systems can remove CO2 from the atmosphere much faster than forests.

The partner in the Mozambican initiative to restore ***mangrove*** forests, announced in February, is Blue Forest, a company based in the United Arab Emirates. A total of 185,000 hectares of land in the central provinces of Zambezia and Sofala are to be transformed into a forest that could sequester up to 500,000 tons of carbon dioxide.

Together, the approximately one million hectares of ***mangrove*** forests in Africa could store more CO2 than countries such as Croatia or Bolivia emit annually in pollutants, explains Blue Forest CEO Wahid Fotuhi. In addition, the forests could also protect coastal communities, create green jobs and help preserve biodiversity.

Africa's large ***mangrove*** forests have been decimated in recent decades by logging, fish farming, coastal development and pollution. As a result, ***blue carbon*** emissions increased, coastal sites are more exposed to flood risk.

Attention to ***mangrove*** restoration was sparked by the successful Mikoko Pamoja project, launched in Kenya in 2013. This protected 117 hectares of ***mangrove*** forest and planted 4000 trees annually. The aim was to protect communities from coastal erosion, fish loss and climate change.

"Mikoko Pamoja" - Swahili for "***mangroves*** together" - was considered the world's first ***blue carbon*** project and brought global fame, recognition, new sources of funds and improved living standards to Gazi, a village of 6000 people. Among other things, every household was connected to the water supply, they say.

Since then, several other projects have borne fruit. In Senegal, 79 million reforested ***mangroves*** are expected to store 500,000 tons of carbon in the coming years. The Gambia launched its own reforestation program in 2017, Madagascar in 2019, and Egypt aims to implement similar plans by November, when it will host the UN Climate Change Conference.

Africa remains excluded from many funding opportunities for action on climate change, however, complains Jean Paul Adam, the UN Economic Commission for Africa's senior climate expert. As a result, he says, the continent cannot adequately arm itself against the consequences of global warming.

Yet the benefits of reforestation could be immense, explains Marissa Stein of the environmental organization Coral Reef Alliance. "Restoring and protecting our marine habitats plays a key role in maintaining the health of our planet," she says. ***Mangroves*** alone store up to four times more carbon per hectare than tropical rainforests, she adds. The Global ***Mangroves*** Alliance also estimates that the ecosystem reduces the risks of damage and flooding for 15 million people and prevents more than $65 billion in property damage each year

The benefits of reforestation can be immense Marissa Stein, environmentalist

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