

# **What's Wet and Green and Linked To Climate Change?**

## **What's wet, green, and full of carbon?**

## **What's wet, green, and resilient?**

If you guessed seagrass, coastal marshes, and mangroves, you're right! Wetlands are precious Pacific ecosystems that build our islands, protect us from waves and storms, and capture carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) to store it in the plants and soils underneath.

Coastal and marine ecosystems that fix and store CO<sub>2</sub> are called 'blue carbon' systems. Blue carbon systems are even more important now that global CO<sub>2</sub> levels are rising. Seagrasses even store carbon 35 times faster than rainforests.

Wetlands are our carbon allies. But wetlands are being destroyed every year, releasing 0.15 to 1.02 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. That's the same as burning 423 billion litres of petrol, more than the entire commercial airline industry uses in a year!

Coastal marshes and mangroves trap sediments and debris, too, helping to keep lagoons crystal clear. Areas without their marshes and mangroves suffer more erosion, leading to loss of land.

Coral reefs are also wetlands. Reefs block 90% of the energy from ocean waves, keeping our islands from washing away. When coral reefs are nibbled by fish, they make sand that feeds our shores. Seagrasses can help slow nearby ocean acidification, so seagrasses and reefs are the ocean's power couple.

If you want to join #GenerationRestoration, check out SPREP's guidelines for mangrove planting and seagrass restoration.

When you choose to build away from wetlands, plant a mangrove, avoid excessive garden fertilisers, and ask for shoreline areas to be conserved, you are saving the ocean – and saving us too.

Help give voice to this Pacific Conversation – learn more about marine and coastal biodiversity in the Pacific islands

**Join in the Pacific Conversation: #SaveOurOcean  
#ResilientPacific**



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