TRENDING

Meet these Female Conservationists Rewilding the Mangroves in Cambodia

By bestfolkmedicine · 03/06/2021 · 2 min read



Unfortunately, mangrove forests are disappearing at an alarming rate in Cambodia and these female conservationists who live there are trying to change things.

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When storms trigger the waves, mangrove forests are the first defensive line for the coastal communities who live in the tropics. But, climate crisis has increased the strength and occurrence of bad weather.

These areas benefit from mangrove trees for fish and are actually a habitat for many marine species.

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According to Varou Mat, a school teacher and mom of three from Kampot Province in the south of Cambodia, mangroves are life and without them, there's no biodiversity and fishermen would lose their income.

Loss of Mangrove Forests Is already an Alarming Issue in Cambodia

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Kampot is one of the provinces that's affected the most by the mangrove clearance. Together with its neighboring Kep, they've experienced the worst mangrove shrink by 62 percent in the last three decades.

ActionAid charity is working alongside women from these communities and elsewhere to improve their adaption to climate change.

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Losing mangrove forests and the climate crisis has increased the Kampot and Ket communities' exposure to storm surges.

The floods last for a week and damage their crops and infrastructure, according to Nget Mana, a midwife whose parents are farmers in Kampot.

Cambodia is one of the countries with the highest risk of climate crisis. Since it disproportionately influences women, the ActionAid charity has launched a campaign which helps women from Cambodia adapt better.

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Named *She Is the Answer*, the campaign is supporting communities and increasing their resilience.

They do this by training them to take up livelihoods adaptive to the climate. This campaign is backed up by research which has found female empowerment to be one of the best solutions to tackle global heating.

The Mangrove Rewilding Project

One of the programs launched by the charity is for rewilding mangroves. Together with the Kampot communities, the charity has been working on planting 100,000 mangrove saplings along the shore.

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This target has already been surpassed. Mat and Mana aren't just helping rewilding mangrove forests, but are also burgeoning the Women Champions' network.

It's a voice of Cambodian women when decisions are made on community and government level.

According to Samphy Eng, a program officer for the ActionAid, Cambodia, the Women Champions program equips women with the confidence, skills, and training needed to become an important part of planning the future of their country and communities.

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Currently, 50 women across the country have been trained and given the climate science knowledge and support necessary for activism in the decision-making processes.

These Women Aren't only Planting Mangroves

In addition to planting mangroves, these female conservationists are also taking part in creating a network of climate-adaptive floating gardens and floating schools where future generations can learn about climate resilience.

Sources:

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