

Anjouan lost over 80% of its natural forest between 1995 and 2014 according to the most authoritative analysis. The deforestation has led to 40 of 50 permanent rivers becoming intermittent or drying up completely and is threatening endemic species. Alongside implementing participatory reforestation and conservation initiatives, the NGO Dahari conducted multiple research studies between 2009 and 2020 to understand the impacts of deforestation.

Based on the results of these studies we have formulated the following seven key policy recommendations for targeted conservation actions to preserve Anjouan's biodiversity. Implementing these recommendations will secure water resources and strengthen the resilience of the population in the face of climate change; a holistic approach to conservation.



1



### Conserving remaining mature native trees and restoring forest around them is the critical action for preserving endemic biodiversity

Anjouan's remaining old-growth forest is spread across 46km<sup>2</sup> of high altitude land in the centre of the island. The mature trees within are an important resource for the island's biodiversity – as well as for securing water resources – but are targeted for sale as timber at an alarming rate: we estimate that 1200 mature native trees are removed yearly from the Moya Forest region alone.

2

### Restoration of biodiversity-friendly habitat at mid-level elevations is also key

On Anjouan, elevations between 500 and 1100 m absl are heavily impacted by human activities with around 70% of the available land converted to agricultural areas and agroforestry systems. The data shows that these elevations are crucial for endemic biodiversity; habitat restoration at these mid-elevations is required to ensure the continued survival of endemic mammals and birds.



3



### The flagship and keystone Livingstone's fruit bat requires additional dedicated conservation action

Long-term monitoring revealed that the Livingstone's fruit bat has low population numbers and is highly threatened by deforestation and increasing risks from extreme weather events. To ensure this species' survival and to stabilise the population, we recommend targeted conservation actions to protect important resources, such as roost and feeding sites, as well as further research into their landscape use and feeding ecology.

4

### Mechanisms to conserve and restore forest habitat must economically benefit local stakeholders to be successful

Efforts to reverse the ongoing deforestation must address the reality of a human-dominated landscape and ensure that actions benefit local communities. Dahari's conservation agreements scheme has proved successful since 2015. Dahari proposes to expand the scheme to areas of conservation interest across Anjouan, incentivising the long-term protection and restoration of forest habitat in individual fields as a complementary mechanism to the broader implementation of protected areas.



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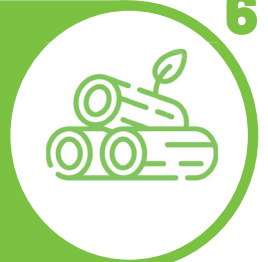
### Reforestation efforts must be participatory if they are to be sustainable

Investment in participatory analysis and engagement with farmers can ensure the right trees are planted by the right people in the right places – with Dahari now supporting farmers to plant over 50 000 trees per year into critical watersheds on Anjouan at a survival rate of 71% after one year. Agroforestry development by and for farmers (focusing planting on their needs) is critical to species conservation and ensuring farming systems are resilient to climate change.

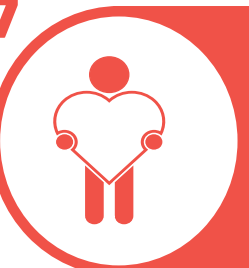
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### Replace the use of endemic trees for the construction and furniture trades

Our wood-use survey clearly showed that the major uses of mature trees coming from the Moya Forest are for construction and the furniture trade. Alongside efforts to reduce tree cutting it will therefore be important to work from the other end of the value chain and look at ways of replacing endemic species with imported timber or through planting appropriate non-native species.



7



### Build pride and appreciation in Anjouan's unique biodiversity

Awareness-raising campaigns around ecosystem services, biodiversity and conservation need to target gaps in knowledge and be linked to behaviour change. Targeted campaigns building pride in Anjouan's biodiversity and integrating local knowledge would support the other, more direct, measures identified above.