Addressing climate change and exchange of experiences at key sites for migratory birds and people in Mauritania

Title
Nature Mauritania in collaboration with local authorities (Prefect, Mayor and other dignitaries), and the local communities from the three project sites in which the Living on the Edge project is being implemented (Keur Macène and Windim) recently organized a workshop under the theme" Climate change and impacts on the natural resources of Lake Mal. The workshop accomplished the following objectives; Identification of the causes and effects of climate change on natural resources at Lake Mal and Identification of mitigation measures and adaptation to climate change. The workshop was attended by at least 25 delegates. The workshop attracted high level dignitaries. It was officially opened by the Prefect. The Mayor of Mal and the Executive Director of Nature Mauritanie also gave speeches, highlighting the impacts of climate change on both people and birds. The Mayor of Mal expressed his concerns about the Mauritanian environment, which he deemed ‘fragile’ and vulnerable in the effects of climate change.

The government of Mauritania has on its part been supporting mitigation measures such as the Green Belt initiative consisting of planting 1 million trees along 4 kilometers in length and 800 in width in a timeline of 4 years. The Green Belt is meant to create an ecological corridor. The Mayor extended appreciation for local scale interventions such as those being implemented by the Living on the Edge project and urged more stakeholders to adopt a flyway scale approach to conservation which will see strengthened collaboration across transboundary areas. On the sidelines of the workshop on climate change, an exchange visit between fishermen of different project sites was organized. During the exchange visit, fruitful discussions were held between fishermen.

Interactions with the fishermen. Photo by Nature Mauritania

The discussion included among others, their level of understanding of the objectives of Natmau and Living on the Edge conservation and livelihood initiatives at the local scale and how these activities are important for flyway conservation. The fishermen are one of the largest resource user groups at the three sites. They used this occasion to review their fishing methods (choice of gear, mesh), to spare juveniles, replenish the stock, institute good environmental practices and improve the quality of fishery products.