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## Nature Based Solutions for Ecosystem Restoration in Southern Europe

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The southern Europe has been recognized as a “hot spot” of ongoing climate change in Europe, being particularly vulnerable to natural disasters in the recent decade. Southern Europe suffers from frequent and disastrous floods, drought and wildfires which foster land degradation while certainly threatening ecosystems in a changing climate. Measures for ecosystem restoration and climate change mitigation are of utmost importance particularly for agricultural and forestry ecosystems. The urgent action to combat climate change impacts calls for measures e.g. by implementing nature-based solutions (NBS) in key sectors to achieve ecosystem restoration and land degradation neutrality, and thus assure relevant ecosystem services to society and human wellbeing. Various approaches can be used to apply NBS, in different fields but practical implementation of NBS needs participatory involvement, institutional and human resources capacity building, requiring local communities and vulnerable groups inclusion. Ecosystem restoration and climate change mitigation achieved by multiple functions of NBS also contribute to the implementation of UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals and Land Degradation Neutrality targets, and lead to enhanced development of circular economy. This research investigates NBS as an opportunity for ecosystem restoration in southern Europe, aiming to provide a comprehensive overview of main obstacles and opportunities for the regional specific conditions.

Key words: ecosystem restoration, southern Europe, climate change, land degradation