

### Myanmar Mangroves: between conflict and cyclones

Mangroves account for only 0.7 per cent of the Earth's tropical forest area, but they provide a wealth of ecological and socio-economic benefits: nursery habitat for fish species, offering protection against coastal surges associated with storms and tsunamis, and storing carbon

Despite their high productivity in providing ecosystem services, over the 20-year period, more than 60 per cent of all mangroves in Myanmar had been permanently or temporarily converted to other uses and in just across Rakhine State, mangrove coverage shrank by 23% from 2000 to 2015

In the 2021 Global Climate Risk Index, out of 183 countries Myanmar is ranked the second most vulnerable to extreme weather events

### Conflict and natural resources

Since a military coup in 2021, conflict, extractive activities and war economies are impacting the natural environment of Myanmar and placing communities at further risk of displacement and food shortages. The exploitation of mangroves ecosystem and other natural resources as effect of the conflict are actively reducing local people's capacity to adapt to the frequent natural hazards, cyclones, floods and long term impacts of climate change, threatening civil society's peaceful cohesion

Implementation of best practices and regulatory and environmental oversight mechanisms is limited, leaving communities with the negative outcomes of extractive activities impacting their land rights, local environment and livelihoods

### Cyclones and mangroves ecosystem: 50 years of data

The fifty years of data on cyclone tracks impacting the Myanmar coastline show how healthy mangrove forests are the key asset in reducing the force of waves because of the resistance provided by stilt roots as well as the trees' trunks and branches. Mangroves also trap and stabilize sediment and reduce the risk of shoreline erosion - which brings waves closer to habitation - by dissipating surface wave energy. Coastal forests can also act as windbreaks in reducing devastation in coastal communities resulting from cyclones.

**Legend**

- Mangroves area
- Administrative boundary
- Cyclone category**
- D
- H
- S
- U
- Density of fatalities in security incidents**
- High  Low

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