



Shields from Roots: Mangrove Restoration

The Concept

Mangroves are coastal ecosystems that act as natural barriers against climate change. Through their complex root systems, they form natural shields from roots, protecting shorelines from erosion, reducing wave energy during storms, and helping communities adapt to rising sea levels. At the same time, mangroves are highly effective carbon sinks, storing large amounts of carbon in both their biomass and the surrounding soil. Their roots support rich biodiversity, improve water quality, and provide essential habitats for marine species. Restoring mangroves means strengthening nature's ability to protect both ecosystems and coastal communities, while also supporting livelihoods and long-term environmental resilience.

Seychelles in Focus

- **29 km²** mangrove cover in Seychelles
- **2–3%** of the national land area
- **2000s** restoration efforts begin

Concentrated across the islands of Mahé, Praslin, and La Digue, these ecosystems form a small but critical natural buffer for the country. Despite their limited extent, Seychelles' mangroves play a disproportionately important role in protecting coastlines, supporting marine biodiversity, and sustaining local livelihoods. Even minor losses can significantly increase vulnerability to climate-related risks, highlighting the importance of ongoing conservation restoration efforts to maintain their protective and ecological functions.

A Face to the Idea:



Terence Vel

Mangrove conservation in Seychelles has a face: the ecologist Terence Vel.

Through school visits, media outreach, and hands-on activities, he helps people understand why mangroves matter and how they contribute to climate resilience and biodiversity.

Working with the Wildlife Clubs of Seychelles, he actively engages young people in:

- Mangrove planting, nursery care
- Wetland clean-ups
- Environmental education and awareness activities

By involving students directly in these efforts, his work strengthens the connection between people and nature. It turns restoration into a shared community experience, fostering youth empowerment, responsibility, and long-term environmental stewardship.



Source: www.unisey.ac.sc/personnel/terence-vel/

The Travelling Idea

Mangrove restoration can travel across regions. It must be adapted to local ecosystems, cultures & communities. Its strength lies in combining nature-based solutions with human engagement.

Takeaway

Protecting mangroves means protecting coastlines, livelihoods, and the future.

