



## **New relationships and trust are needed to advance nature-based solutions.**

Intermediaries, key individuals or organisations, play a valuable but often overlooked role in providing the glue that holds together the coalitions of actors needed to realise nature-based solutions. Intermediaries help to map the landscape of actors involved, broker relationships amongst actors, foster collaborations and build trust. They can translate knowledge from diverse sources and make it relevant for locally specific conditions, in turn building capacity on the ground for the uptake of tools and knowledge generated elsewhere. Yet the presence of intermediaries is often more a matter of good fortune than intended design in the governance of nature-based solutions. More explicitly recognising the need for intermediaries and including them from the outset in the design and implementation of specific projects can be one way of ensuring that the capacities needed for successful nature-based solutions are established. Another option is to foster new institutional arrangements or co-governance initiatives which develop and hone intermediary functions, which also provide a means through which to deliberate on how the costs and benefits of such projects can be shared over time. Where nature-based solutions are being implemented in the context of previous histories of conflicts over land-use or where there has been contestation over policy priorities amongst stakeholders, developing and supporting intermediaries should be an urgent priority. Intermediaries are not only able to foster trust and consensus but also to create spaces where dissent and contestation can take place and the desired outcomes for nature-based solutions can be deliberated amongst diverse groups.