



EMPOWERING YOUNG VOICES

AND THE POWER OF NARRATIVE

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DECEMBER 3, 2025

AGENDA

- About Y4N
- Storytelling 101
- Storytelling in three different contexts
- Key messages
- Cool resources
- Q&A



ABOUT YOUTH4NATURE



ABOUT US

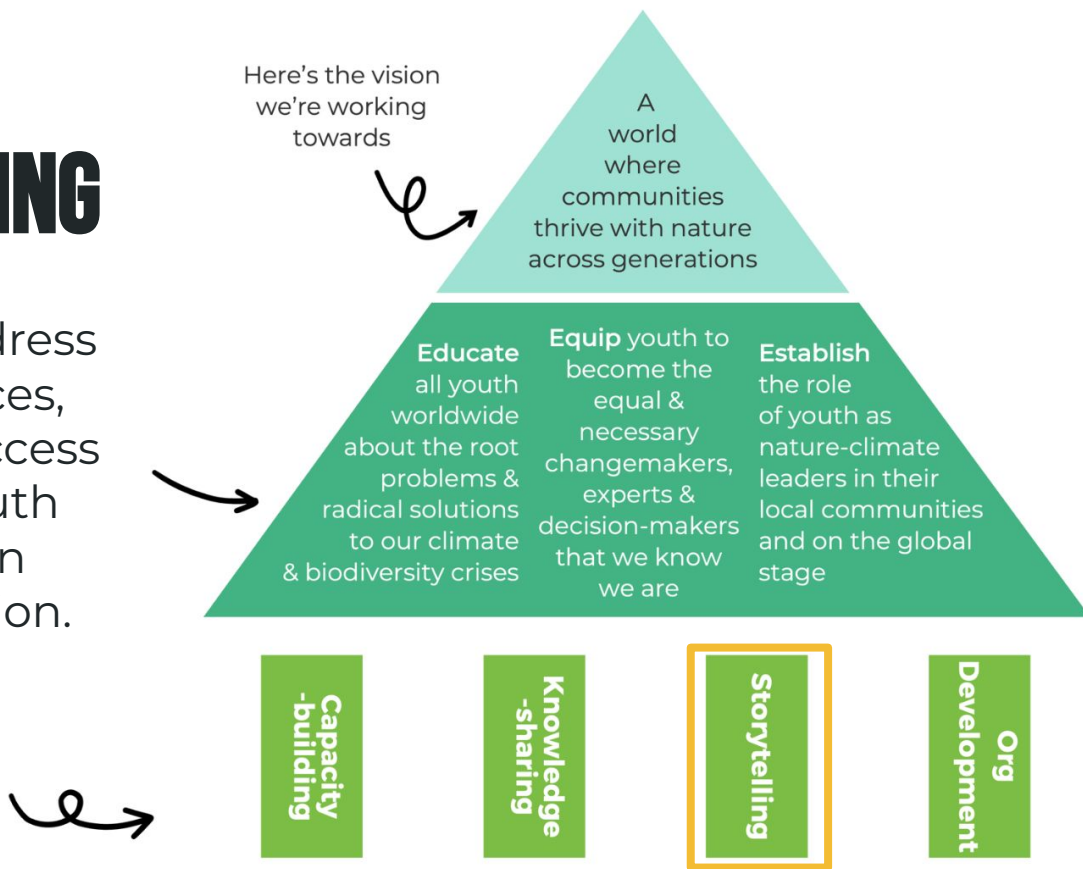
Youth4Nature (Y4N) is a by youth, for-youth, international non-profit. It educates, equips and establishes youth as leaders on system-wide solutions for the ecological and climate crises rooted in traditional & scientific knowledge and grounded in intergenerational justice.

Vision

A world where
**communities
thrive with nature
across generations.**




WHAT WE ARE DOING

At Youth4Nature, we address the challenges of resources, capacity, knowledge & access that act as barriers to youth involvement in leading on nature as a climate solution.



AT Y4N

STORYTELLING ...

-  We **bring together** climate, biodiversity and social (wellbeing & justice) action;
-  We establish a **hopeful, solution-oriented & pluriversal** narrative on the twin crises;
-  We shift the **decision-making & financing** of climate-nature solutions towards equity



Visit the Map

viewer.mapme.com/y4nstorymap

THE BASICS - STORYTELLING

101



An aerial photograph of a modern building with a green roof. A large green circle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the title and a paragraph. A smaller light blue circle is overlaid on the right side, containing a definition of stories. A yellow circle is partially visible at the bottom right.

WHAT IS STORYTELLING?

Storytelling describes the social and cultural activity of sharing stories. Every culture has its own stories or narratives, which are transmitted as a means of entertainment, education, cultural preservation or instilling moral values.

Stories are fictional and non-fictional accounts of events, situations and experiences.

STORYTELLING AS A TOOL FOR CHANGE

Storytelling is a **means to an end**, not the end itself. It is a **multifaceted skill and tool** to:

- **reflect** on experiences and actions
- **communicate** concerns and solutions
- **showcase** work and expertise
- **record** journeys and learnings

Stories can be powerful **devices and examples** of the **understanding, change, and mobilisation needed** to tackle the climate and ecological crises.



CRAFTING AN IMPACTFUL

CLIMATE-NATURE STORY

PLAN

- Select a central **issue/question** with an accompanying **solution/answer**
- Decide **purpose and audience**
- Choose a **medium**

PACKAGE

- **People** - who is in your story?
- **Place** - where is your story set?
- **Time** - when does it take place?
- **Themes**- the (sub)topics covered

POLISH

- Be personal!
- Appeal to audience emotion
- Have a clear and strong message
- Be simple & focused

ABC - Audience Before Content

COMMON STORY STRUCTURES

Autobiographical

- Starts from childhood
- Covers education and career choices
- Often touches on familiar and community experiences
- Ends in current life stage or future vision

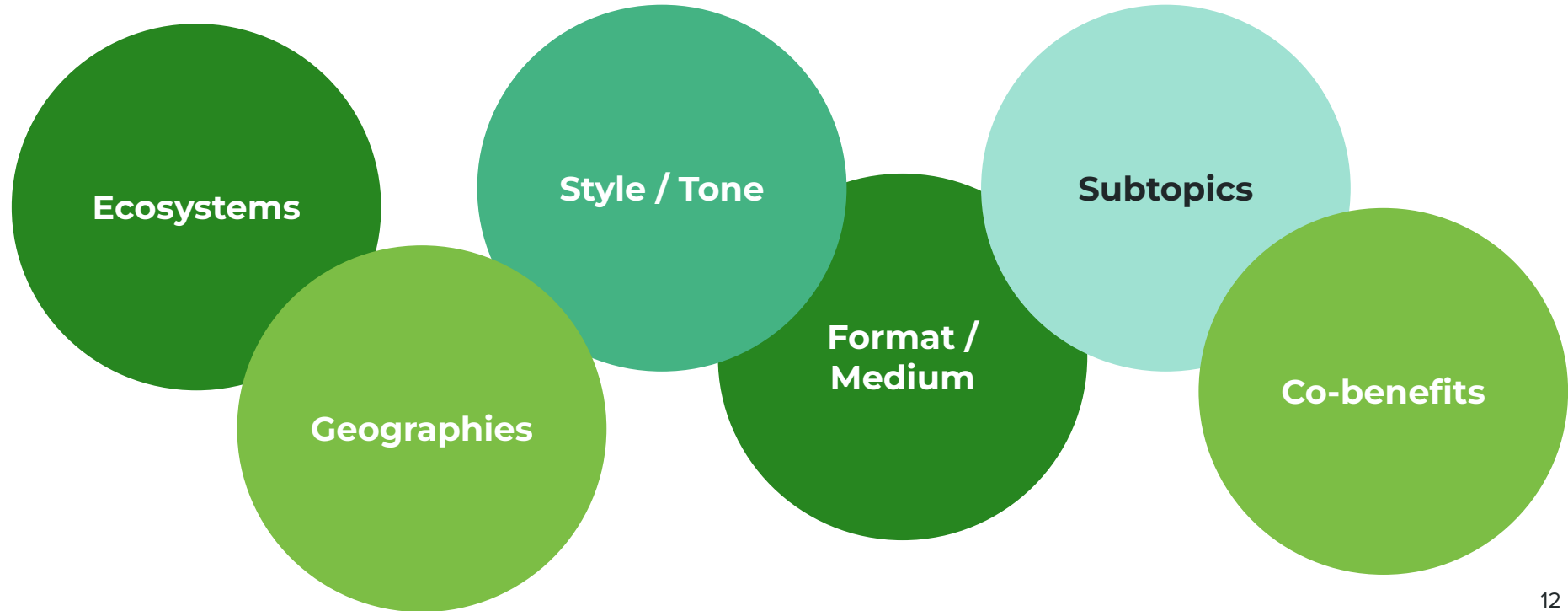
Hero's Journey / Awakening

1. Context introduction
2. Encountering and explaining the problem
3. Deciding and working on a solution
4. Outcome of solution/ action taken

Given Occasion

- Describes a one-off project or task
- Prioritises situational and character details over conflict and resolution
- Explicit instructions and /or learnings

BRING DIVERSITY AND UNIQUENESS TO YOUR STORY BY BEING PARTICULAR ABOUT ...



STORYTELLING IN THREE DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

USES OF STORYTELLING

... for Politics & Policy(making)

- Framing and contextualising decisions/ideas
- Sharing evidence and data in digestible ways
- Doing consultations with community groups
- Setting common ground, identity & values with audience
- **Examples:** *Impact Case Studies, Elevator Pitches, Campaign Speeches*

... for Activism

- Shifting/controlling messaging and narratives
- Fostering human connections & movement-building
- Promoting wellbeing, empowerment and self-care
- Sharing advice/learnings among members
- **Examples:** *Story-based Strategy, Sharing Circles, Rally Speeches*

USES OF STORYTELLING

... for Research & Scientific Projects

- Scoping and collecting data
- Supporting qualitative data (narrative) analysis
- Communicating/translating findings
- Building trust-building with research communities
- **Examples:** *Timeline Transects, Body Mapping, Life Story Interviews*

... for Education

- Accessible and “real-life” scientific knowledge
- Interdisciplinary teaching on climate and biodiversity
- Experiential outdoors learning for younger audiences
- Traditional and indigenous knowledge sharing
- **Examples:** *Reading Storytime, Arts & Craft, Science Projects*

... for Creative and Cultural Expression

- Preservation, conservation and restoration of ecological cultural practices, materials and knowledge
- Production of thought-provoking & engaging art
- Wider multi-format dissemination across more accessible mediums
- **Examples:** *Oral Stories, Spoken Word, Photography Exhibitions*

... for Public Awareness & Participation

- Information sharing (against misinformation) for citizens
- Informed consultation & collaboration on policy agendas
- Community cohesion and development campaigns
- Sense of ownership over policies/projects among citizens
- **Examples:** *Memorials, Monuments, Newspapers, Radio*

1. STORYTELLING TO SUPPORT POLICY AND AWARENESS



FACES OF FORESTRY - A LIVING LIBRARY

🌱 Faces of Forestry (FOF) is a campaign that **showcases the human side of the forest & forest adjacent sectors.**

🌱 It amplifies the **diversity of forests, people, and practices** that keep forests sustained and healthy.

🌱 Intended to be a **living library of interesting high-quality stories & ongoing engagements**

🌱 **7 series** filmed around the world at 6 global events+online, 48 individual stories + counting!

Learn more here:

<https://www.youth4nature.org/faces-of-forestry>



BLOGS



FACES OF FORESTRY X 9TH AMERICAN FOREST CONGRESS

Asking young professionals working in forestry and forest-related sectors, "What is your dream for forests in America in the next five years?" brought answers full of inspiration, personality, and imagination at the 9th American Forest Congress.

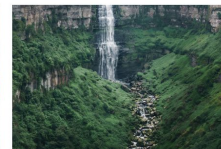
[Read More →](#)



REFLECTIONS ON THE 9TH AMERICAN FOREST CONGRESS: YOUTH IN A FOREST LEGACY

"Youth are not just the future of forests – we are the present." What does it mean to really have youth at the table in a defining moment for America's forests? Read our full reflections from the 9th American Forest Congress to learn more about this critical forest dialogue and what it means to be part of this space.

[Read More →](#)



FACES OF FORESTRY X UNCCD COP16

In this Faces of Forestry series, hear from young leaders from across Latin America, Guinea-Bissau, and the Philippines as they mobilize their communities and create real change in the forestry sector.

[Read More →](#)



MEET THE FACES OF FORESTRY!





9TH AMERICAN FOREST CONGRESS

HEALTHY FORESTS, THRIVING COMMUNITIES

RESOLVED, to implement effective communications efforts to advance public understanding of the benefits forests provide, and of the essential roles of active forest management and forest conservation in maintaining these benefits. These communications efforts should:

- Involve governmental, nongovernmental, philanthropic, community, and private entities;
- Be based on a greater understanding of the sources of public attitudes towards forest management, and of how to inform these sources; and
- Use advanced analytics and modern communications practices, approaches, and technologies, as well as powerful community-centered storytelling and personal engagements to help connect new audiences and sectors to the value proposition of investing in healthy and resilient forests.

Vote: Strongly Support 66%, Support/Can Live With 31%, Oppose 3%



2. STORYTELLING FOR CONSERVATION



CITIZEN SCIENCE - STORYTELLING TO REVEAL CONSERVATION KNOWLEDGE

Technical data:

Quantitative, spatial, or scientific measurements that guide conservation decisions but often miss human context.

Citizen Science:

Capture community observations, emotions, and patterns revealing ecological changes overlooked by datasets or formal monitoring.

Local Knowledge and Lived Realities:

Offer deep cultural, historical, and experiential insights shaping how people understand, use, and protect ecosystems daily.

Citizen Science complements, providing the missing layer of what counts as Conservation knowledge

A community-centric conservation approach where communities map ecological resource use values, sharing their stories of access and use



STORYTELLING AS EVIDENCE FOR CONSERVATION AND PLACE-BASED MEANING



Stories provide a linkage between human-nature relationships.

My work with **science communication** combines **photography, mapping** and community narratives to understand ecological dynamics.



3. STORYTELLING TO SUPPORT LOCAL ACTION



INUKA: A BY-YOUTH, FOR-YOUTH, NBS ACCELERATOR PROJECT



INUKA (Swahili for “to rise up”) is a fully by-youth, for-youth, holistic Nature-based Solutions (NbS) accelerator programme. Working with five teams of four youth practitioners (20 youth in total) who have existing NbS projects, across varying ecosystems in Kenya, **INUKA will address three goals:**

1

BIODIVERSITY & NBS BEST PRACTICE

- Deliver technical training & experiential field site visits to youth NbS practitioners to improve the quality of their projects.
- Seed fund existing, youth-led NbS projects to scale up their impact for biodiversity.

2

SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS & YOUTH LEADERSHIP

- Deliver project management, & entrepreneurship training to youth NbS practitioners, to transform their projects into sustainable livelihoods.
- Run intergenerational mentorship programming to build leadership skills & professional networks amongst youth NbS practitioners.

3

COMMUNITY BUILDING & STORYTELLING

- Build an intergenerational community of practice amongst NbS practitioners in Kenya.
- Provide storytelling and communications training for youth NbS practitioners.
- Launch a compelling & impactful storytelling campaign designed to inspire other youth in Afrika and the Global South to lead their own NbS projects.

INUKA will help address short-term threats to **biodiversity** by enhancing existing NbS projects, and address long-term threats by supporting **sustainable livelihood and economic opportunities** for young NbS practitioners, and by **catalysing a wider legacy for change** through community-building and compelling storytelling.

THE YOUTH-LED, NBS PROJECTS:



Green Generation

Initiative: land restoration and reforestation, fostering a tree-growing culture amongst young people
→ Nyeri



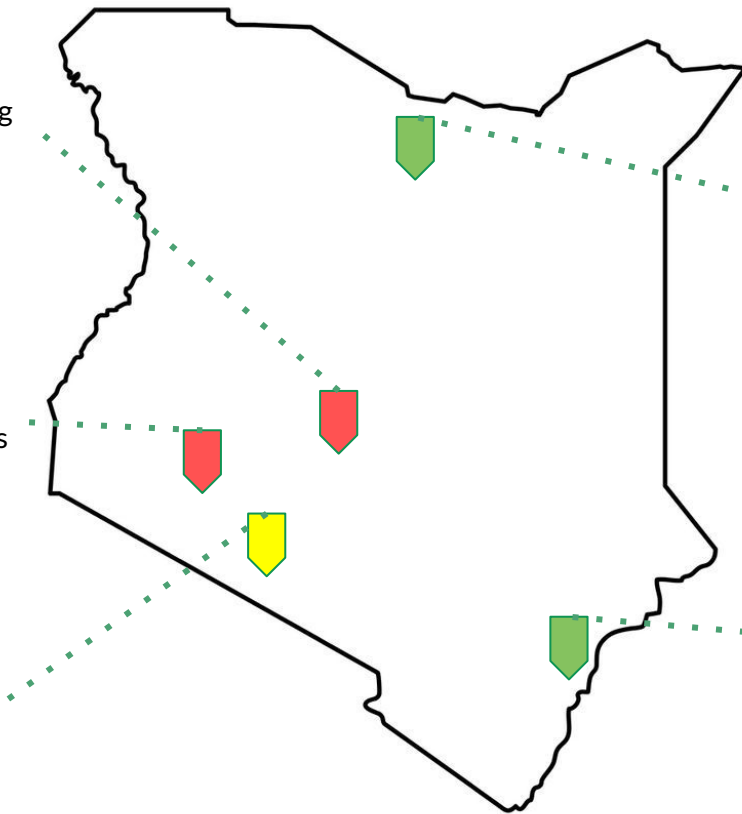
Konservation:

climate-smart agriculture and food sovereignty, through rural & grassroots project work
→ Nyamira



Friends of Ondiri

Wetland: conserving & managing the Ondiri wetland as a source of biodiversity and freshwater
→ Kikuyu



Nature and People as One:

farmer-managed natural regeneration in arid and semi-arid landscapes, in partnership with local & Indigenous communities
→ Marsabit



Big Ship: mangrove protection & conservation, based in community development
→ Tudor creek, Mikindani, Mombasa



KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Storytelling is a means to an end; it is a multifaceted skill and tool that we can use to connect people, knowledge systems, climate, nature, and forests.
2. Storytelling is about making an idea relatable - know your ABCs and remember that the media is the message.
3. Youth have stories to tell and their perspectives can expand forest narratives beyond traditional audiences.

4 TYPES of DIGITAL MEDIA



1. Articles and blogs

Publishing written content online — like articles, blogs or white papers is a great way to reach a wider audience since a lot of people can connect to the internet.



2. Illustration and images

This is an excellent way to grab your audience's attention online, consumers love visuals. Additionally, people can share these images or illustrations a lot easier with their friends or family.



3. Video

Consumers love to consume content that is in a video format. This is why incorporating video into your digital platforms is essential in reaching your desired target audience and keeping their attention.



4. Audio

This form of digital media is one of the best methods to grab your audience's attention. An example could be starting a podcast that sums up an article, blog, or giving recent updates on a certain story.



SOME RESOURCES AND GREAT STORYTELLING EXAMPLES

CAMPAIGNS:

- IF NOT US THEN WHO - FILMS
- NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC - STORYTELLERS COLLECTIVE, SLINGSHOT CAMPAIGN
- UN DECADE ON RESTORATION - STORYTELLING CAMPAIGN

COURSES:

- UNDP - LEARNING FOR NATURE HUB - EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION FOR INDIGENOUS AND LOCAL LEADERS ONLINE COURSE

OTHER COOL INITIATIVES:

- YOUNG STORYTELLERS (FOR CONFERENCES, ETC)
- SOCIAL MEDIA AMBASSADORS - GLOBAL LANDSCAPES FORUM
- PODCAST- GOODFIRE, YOURFORESTPODCAST, TIMBERWARS
- NATURE INFLUENCERS- @NERDYABOUTNATURE, @HOWTOLOVEAFOREST, @JACOBSIMONSAYS
- FOREST COMMUNITIES: #FORESTPROUD, WOMENINWOOD
- MUST WATCH - COMMUNICATING WITH PURPOSE - A TREE TALK BY ROBERT GRACE



KEEP CONNECTED

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