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**AFRICAN FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION INITIATIVE -
AFR100**

I. Background

1. The African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100) is a country-led initiative to restore 100 million hectares of deforested and degraded landscapes across Africa by 2030. It connects participating African nations with technical and financial support to scale up restoration on the ground and capture associated benefits, including fuelwood, food security, biodiversity conservation, climate change resilience, and poverty alleviation arising from sustainable use of forest products and ecosystem services.

2. AFR100 contributes to the achievement of the Bonn Challenge and the New York Declaration on Forests, the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15 and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Land Degradation Neutrality targets among other targets. AFR100 works within the framework of the African Resilient Landscapes Initiative (ARLI). AFR100 fits well with FAO member countries' global and regional priorities as expressed by FAO's strategic objectives and regional initiatives as well as the recently launched Hand-in-Hand Initiative¹.

3. The AFR100 Secretariat is hosted by the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD). The secretariat is supported by a management team, joined by FAO in October 2019. To date, the Management Team involves the following organizations: the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, which is the German International Development Agency (GIZ), FAO, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), The World Bank, the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). In addition, 17 technical partner

¹ <http://www.fao.org/3/nb922en/nb922en.pdf>

organizations, including FAO support AUDA-NEPAD and member countries in planning, implementing and monitoring AFR100 in the respective countries.

4. At its 21st Session, the Commission encouraged Members to take part in AFR100. It requested FAO's support in the preparation of restoration plans, in the formulation of national and transboundary projects and in resource mobilization. Additionally, the Commission requested the Secretariat to include AFR100 as a standing item in the agenda of future sessions of the Commission AFR100. This document provides an updated overview of progress in the implementation of AFR100 in particular FAO's support to the Initiative since the 21st Session held in Senegal in June 2018.

II. Progress made in countries' engagement in AFR100

5. To date, 29 African nations have signed up to AFR100, together pledging to restore 125 million hectares of land, exceeding the original 100 million ambition (see table 1 below)². While the figures below reflect a high political will, implementation and tracking progress on the ground is still a challenge. Twenty countries have conducted restoration opportunities assessments using the Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology (ROAM)³. A number of them have prepared Restoration action plans and strategies, allocating budget, and are working to scale up restoration activities and increase resource mobilization efforts, including through national, bilateral and multilateral resources such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

Table 1. Countries restoration commitments under AFR100 (AUDA-NEPAD, 2020)

Country	Restoration commitment (in ha)	Year of commitment
Benin	0.5 million	2016
Burkina Faso	5 million	2018
Burundi	2 million	2015
Cameroon	12 million	2017
Central African Republic	3.5 million	2016
Chad	1.4 million	2017
Cote d' Ivoire	5 million	2016
Democratic Republic of the Congo	8 million	2016
Ethiopia	15 million	2016
Ghana	2 million	2015
Guinea	2 million	2016
Kenya	5.1 million	2016
Liberia	1 million	2015
Madagascar	4 million	2015
Malawi	4.5 million	2016
Mali	10 million	2019
Mozambique	1 million	2015
Niger	3.2 million	2015
Nigeria	4 million	2017
Republic of Congo	2 million	2016
Sudan	14.6 million	2017
Rwanda	2 million	2011

² Source AUDA-NEPAD, 2020: www.AFR100.org

³ <https://afr100.org/content/guide-restoration-opportunities-assessment-methodology-roam-assessing-forest-landscape>

Senegal	2 million	2016
South Africa	3.6 million	2017
Eswatini	0.5 million	2017
Tanzania	5.2 million	2018
Togo	1.4 million	2015
Uganda	2.5 million	2014
Zimbabwe	2 million	2018
Total	125 million	

6. Challenges were identified and discussed during the 1st Partners' meeting organized in May 2019 in Dakar, Senegal⁴ as well as the 4th Annual Partnership Meeting organized back-to-back with the Global Landscapes Forum on 26-28 September in Accra, Ghana. Both meetings underlined the need for fostering implementation on the ground and invited technical and financial partners to scale up support. It also gave the opportunity to member countries to learn from each other and share lessons and experiences through their ongoing country projects and regional programmes such as the Great Green Wall. The 4th AFR100 Partnership meeting also pointed to priority areas of support as illustrated in figure 1 below.



Figure 1. Areas of support in AFR 100 implementation (AUDA-NEPAD, 2020).

⁴ <https://afr100.org/content/afr100-technical-partners-meeting-summary>

III. The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration : an opportunity to boost AFR100 implementation

7. Adopted by the UN General Assembly on March 2019, the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) is emphasizing the scaling-up of restoration work to address the severe degradation of terrestrial and marine ecosystems, worldwide. It aims to boost restoration work and generate further action to support the materialization of the political commitments, building on the public demand for action on issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and the resulting impacts on economies and livelihoods, especially for vulnerable communities. The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration is co-led by FAO and UNEP and will foster collaboration with many partner organization and member countries.

8. For Africa, the Pan-African Action Agenda on Ecosystem Restoration⁵ for increased resilience endorsed at the African Ministerial Summit on Biodiversity (13 November 2018, in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt) provides the framework for implementing the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration. The African Union Development Agency-NEPAD coordinates the Pan-African Action Agenda, which was developed in anticipation of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and builds also on AFR100 commitments. The Pan-African Action Agenda on Ecosystem Restoration entails:

- Assessment of restoration opportunities at scale across the continent;
- Improving the enabling environment for ecosystem restoration;
- Scaling up ongoing initiatives such as Africa's Great Green Wall and AFR100;
- Planning and implementation of ecosystem restoration activities, especially in transboundary areas and for critical ecosystems; and
- Monitoring progress in a systematic way.

IV. FAO's support to AFR100

A. FAO's Regional Technical Cooperation programme

9. At a request of AUDA-NEPAD, FAO through its regional office developed a Regional Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP regional Project) to support the implementation and monitoring of AFR100. The project proposal, of a duration of two years and approved in July 2019, aims at strengthening capacities of AUDA-NEPAD, countries' institutions and stakeholders across sectors for effective coordination and implementation of AFR100 commitments. It focuses primarily on the following: (i) Establishment of an online monitoring and knowledge platform on Restoration in Africa and hosted by the Secretariat; (ii) Developing a regional capacity development plan benefiting countries, addressing implementation and monitoring AFR100 at country and regional levels; (iii) Support to resource mobilization efforts through the formulation of a regional / country programme portfolio with technical and financial partners, including through GEF and GCF resources. The TCP project is at its inception phase, developing a detailed work plan and processing the recruitment of a national expert to be hosted at AUDA-NEPAD to support the Secretariat.

10. In support to the above regional efforts, FAO is building specific tools to address the issues related to restoration, through a global project with Japan. The project focuses initially on the identification of global land suitability for restoration efforts (through a collaboration with ETH Zurich University with a Science publication completed and a Forestry Working Paper under

⁵ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/274b/80e7/34d341167178fe08effd0900/cop-14-afr-hls-04-final-en.pdf>

development). A restoration module will be built inside the cloud-computing platform SEPAL⁶ and will include a land suitability component. The module will be tested in Kenya and Uganda to overcome technical and capacity barriers for restoration through building capacity of country colleagues on the assessment, monitoring and reporting of restoration efforts.

B. The Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism (FLRM)

11. FLRM⁷ was established in 2015 to support countries in the implementation of the Bonn Challenge. Several ongoing initiatives are currently supported by the FLRM, in partnership with other key AFR100 partners (WRI, IUCN, GIZ, IKI/BMU among others), to support both national and regional efforts. This includes The Restoration Initiative (TRI) funded by GEF 6 in collaboration with UNEP and IUCN and the IKI⁸ funded project: ‘The Paris Agreement in action: upscaling forest and landscape restoration to achieve nationally determined contributions’, benefiting Niger and Burkina Faso.

12. FLRM supported countries in the planning and implementation of Forest and Landscape Restoration. The FLRM is now operational in 12 countries in Africa: Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Morocco, Niger, Sao Tome e Principe, Rwanda and Uganda.

13. Furthermore, examples of technical support includes the development of cost efficient monitoring and evaluation frameworks for FLR, the organization of knowledge sharing events and establishment of a strong community of practice on several key FLR topics (sustainable finance for forest and FLR, monitoring and evaluation, forest genetic resources and assisted natural regeneration techniques, etc.) and strengthening information on the economics of ecosystems restoration. A monitoring tool was recently developed in collaboration with WRI and published in 2019⁹.

C. FAO's support to Africa's Great Green Wall and its contribution to AFR100

14. FAO is supporting the African Union Commission, the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall (PAGGW) and member countries in the implementation of the Great Green Wall (GGW) for the Sahara and the Sahel initiative (GGWSSI) through an EU-funded Action Against Desertification¹⁰ programme. Activities are ongoing in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal and have, so far, resulted in restoration of over 53,000 ha. The restoration approach and model putting at the center communities and biodiversity, is being scaled up in another three countries (Mauritania, Eritrea and Sudan) with support of Turkey funding through an additional project called - Boosting Restoration for Income, Development, Generating Ecosystem Services - (BRIDGES)¹¹. Building on the project's successful approach, lessons learnt and results, a manual “Restoration in action against desertification” was published in January 2020¹², in both English and

⁶ System for Earth Observation Data Access, Processing and Analysis for Land Monitoring (<https://sepal.io>)

⁷ <http://www.fao.org/in-action/forest-landscape-restoration-mechanism/en/>

⁸ IKI is the International Climate Initiative of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU). For further information on this funding scheme: <https://www.international-climate-initiative.com/en/>

⁹ <http://www.fao.org/in-action/forest-landscape-restoration-mechanism/resources/detail/en/c/1253837/>

¹⁰ <http://www.fao.org/in-action/action-against-desertification>

¹¹ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7952e.pdf>

¹² <http://www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/CA6932EN>

French, highlighting methodologies and lessons learnt for scaling up large-scale restoration to support rural communities' resilience..

15. As an accredited agency for the GCF, and to support member countries' efforts in scaling up restoration as part of the Great Green Wall, FAO is supporting 6 member countries at their request in developing a multi-country project to be submitted to GCF funding. Efforts are also on the way for separate country project proposals development in both Sudan and Mauritania.

16. As an accredited agency of the GEF, FAO is supporting countries in the Southern region of Africa (SADC countries) in preparing the GEF-7 Sustainable Forest Management Impact Programme on Dryland Sustainable Landscapes, contributing to the implementation of the Great Green Wall in SADC countries.

V. Points for consideration

17. The Commission may wish to invite its member countries to:

- assess opportunities for restoring degraded land and establish commitments for restoration under AFR100 and related initiatives, if they have not already done so;
- maintain the momentum of AFR100 by translating the country visions and commitments into concrete restoration plans and restoration programmes;
- support the mobilization of increased levels of public funding for forest and landscape restoration and facilitate greater levels of investment and financing from the private sector, taking advantage of the UN Decade Ecosystem on Restoration (2021-2030) and of the Pan-African Action Agenda on Ecosystem Restoration for Increased Resilience;
- Build synergies between AFR100, GGW and other ongoing restoration activities, and consolidate these as an integral part of their contributions to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

18. The commission may wish to request FAO to:

- continue supporting member countries, upon their requests, in preparing AFR100 forest restoration plans, containing sections on forest restoration opportunities, priorities, and implementation strategies in concert with already existing national plans and strategies;
 - continue supporting countries, upon request, in project formulation, mobilizing resources including through GEF and GCF, to contribute to AFR100, GGW and other similar programmes and initiatives in line with national and regional priorities;
 - continue the preparation of the planned "State of restoration in Africa" report, under the regional TCP project, in collaboration with member countries and AFR100 technical and financial partners.
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