



**Global
Landscapes
Forum**
—
Bonn

Connecting for impact: From commitment to action

World Conference Center, Bonn, Germany
1-2 December, 2018

OUTCOME STATEMENT

Global Landscapes Forum

The Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) is a multi-stakeholder platform with a global secretariat led by CIFOR and core funding provided by the Government of Germany. Charter members: Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD), Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Ecoagriculture Partners, Evergreen Agriculture, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Global Environment Facility (GEF), Indigenous Peoples Major Group (IPMG), International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR), International Union of Forests Research Organization (IUFRO), Rainforest Alliance, Rare, Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI), United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment), Wageningen University & Research (WUR), World Agroforestry Centre, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Germany, Youth In Landscapes (YIL), World Bank Group.

Funding partners



Federal Ministry
for the Environment, Nature Conservation
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Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

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SEE!

by Taiguara Alencar, Brazil

*See!
Look!
And see the horizon!
Look ahead!
And see the Landscape!
Look, please!
And see our home!*

*We're not the same...
My crop is not so prosper...
My house is not so fancy...
My car is not so fast...
Even my skin is not like yours...
But, still, we live together...*

*We are totally different...
Almost the opposite...
Your land is vast...
And mine is tiny...
But, still, we live together...*

*'Cause the air is just one air...
The water is just one water...
So...
May the horizon also be just one...
Yours and mine...
May I can dream your dream...
With the same meaning...
The same feeling...
The same dream...*

*So, think...
And remember...
Always remember...
That we live in the same home...
That we live in the same...
Landscape!*

Key messages

Moving from commitment to action toward sustainable land use practices across all ecosystems needs:

Collaborative leadership and trust for deriving and strengthening novel partnerships between science, government, business, finance and civil society

Polycentric governance structures that fully engage and recognize the needs and aspirations of local communities, indigenous peoples, and especially women and youth

Innovative investment and business models that give proper value to social and environmental well-being

Motivated people who take the first steps together

Key outcomes

Hundreds of partners committed to accelerate efforts in 2019

21 new members signed the GLF charter

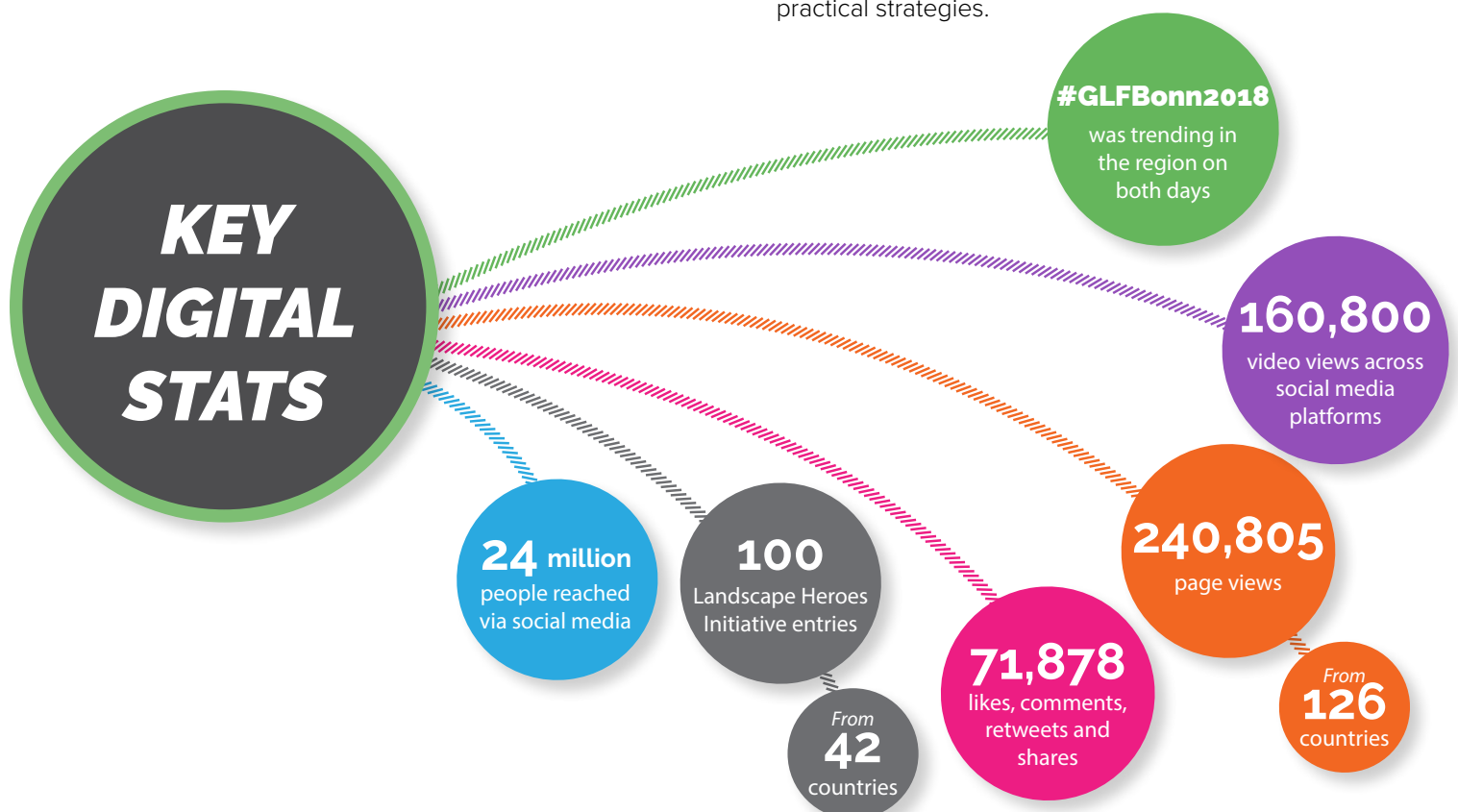
The Landscape Academy was launched



Background

Sustainable landscapes are essential for the future we want. They provide humanity with food, health benefits, livelihoods and income, business and trade opportunities, renewable materials and energy, biodiversity conservation, fertile and productive soils, climate regulation and water security. Working toward the achievement of sustainable and low-emission development inspired by initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Goals, New York Declaration on Forests, Bonn Challenge, Aichi Targets and Paris Agreement, the second annual [Global Landscapes Forum](#) in [Bonn](#) aimed to 'reignite the flame' to accelerate and mobilize collective action.

We know the changes we must make, and the time to change is now. This is one of the main messages emerging from the summit which on 1-2 December, 2018, assembled 1,000 participants on-site and thousands more online to go beyond pledges and commitments and spur collective action on securing a more sustainable future for life on this planet. Participants reiterated that business-as-usual will not get landscapes on the track of sustainability, or do it broadly and quickly enough to meet critical biodiversity, climate and development goals. What, then, will get us where we need to go? To answer this question, delegates from governments, academia, NGOs, the private sector and civil society devoted the better part of the two-day forum to presenting specific principles and practical strategies.





Claire Nasike, Food For Life campaigner from Greenpeace Africa



From commitment to action

In the context of increasing national commitments to international conventions on climate, biodiversity and land degradation, the GLF convened in Bonn around the theme of turning ‘commitment to action.’ Despite the encouraging pledges of national governments to restore degraded lands and reduce emissions to meet climate targets, representatives from both the [German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety \(BMU\)](#) and the [German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development \(BMZ\)](#) reminded us that tropical forest loss and land degradation continue at unprecedented rates, while progress toward climate targets is not forthcoming. Steffen Schmitz of BMZ stressed the need for better rural governance contingent on four dimensions: decentralization of power, participation and empowerment of local communities, cross-sectoral territorial policy development and legal security. Agreeing with his counterpart, Jochen Flasbarth of BMU suggested that “without a landscape focus we will not be able to meet any of the globally agreed targets.” In his welcoming remarks, [Center for International Forestry Research \(CIFOR\)](#) Director General Robert Nasi encouraged participants to rise to the challenge by utilizing the opportunity provided by the GLF as a multi-stakeholder platform for accelerating the collective actions of youth, policy, practice, business and research, with the warning: “If we don’t act now, the window of opportunity is closing very fast.”

Indonesian Minister of Environment and Forestry Siti Nurbaya Bakar offered some insights as to how commitments can be turned into action with her reflections on changes in Indonesia’s forest and peatland management policies. Indonesia has recently moved away from forest production plans toward sustainable forest landscape management that aligns with national development plans and

“People don’t know the power they have to change the world, starting by small things, starting by one less trash”



Fe Cortez,
Menos 1 Lixo

international commitments related to climate and biodiversity. In doing so, Indonesia has reinforced a forest and peatland moratorium, restored degraded peatlands, improved smallholder cultivation practice, continued law enforcement and established a peatland restoration agency.

Perhaps more than any previous GLF, this event consistently featured the thoughts and actions of youth in the landscape. Immediately taking up the challenge presented by the plenary speakers, [Felix Finkbeiner](#), founder of [Plant-for-the-Planet](#), delivered his keynote speech, demonstrating the passion, vision and enthusiasm required if we are to move beyond restoration pledges to concerted action. At just 21 years of age, Finkbeiner has taken on the responsibility of coordinating a campaign to plant one trillion trees and has already mobilized the support of 70,000 other committed young environmentalists. Next year their efforts will see the launch of a digital platform that will enable users to document and compare tree planting efforts around the globe.

[Fe Cortez](#), a Brazilian panelist in the all-youth (and all-female) plenary, shared a similarly inspirational ‘commitment to action’ story. Cortez founded the reusable cup enterprise [Menos 1 Lixo](#) (One less trash) and subsequently created a movement around



“One thing is to have a plan. Another is to get it implemented”



Lars Graudal,
University of Copenhagen

conscious consumption and waste reduction that has reached over 10 million people. Reflecting on the long-known challenge of making sustainability science more publicly accessible, Cortez explained that [Menos 1 Lixo](#) is an educational platform that “uses cool words to talk about hard topics” to empower people to make more informed behavioral choices. When pressed on how a movement toward greater public environmental consciousness can be stimulated, Fe Cortez emphasized that we can influence change and build trust by “connecting with hearts and minds,” she said. “People don’t know the power they have to change the world, starting by small things, starting by one less trash.”

Such sentiments resonated with a subsequent plenary that brought together six senior panelists to share their insights and perspectives related to the roles of academia, South-South cooperation, grassroots efforts, leadership, training and program development for mobilizing collective action. Almost echoing the thoughts of Cortez, [IUFRO](#) Deputy Executive Director Michael Kleine identified the science-society gap as a key barrier to collective action, stating that “practitioners are not interested in listening to scientists talking about science.” Science needs to be actively integrated into forest and landscape restoration (FLR) processes that are understood to be *social* processes with scientists encouraged to start from the political and practical questions and use scientific knowledge to provide practical innovations and influence policy solutions.

Head of [Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation](#) Hedwig Bruggeman suggested that the tools and techniques for landscape approaches and FLR are there (and have been for some time); the final mile is about generating the collective action. What we need are the leadership and process skills to develop more integrated institutions. Kaoru Kitajima of [Kyoto University](#) however offered a cautionary note that sometimes just skills and methods are insufficient, and we must therefore look beyond skills, emphasizing that sometimes “to be a scientist is also to uncover

people’s lies.” We must therefore train scientists from developing countries to think critically, have disciplinary rigor, engage in dialogue with stakeholders across sectors and provide a critical examination of landscape approaches with thorough evaluations that can then inform evidence-based actions.

Overcoming disciplinary silos and language barriers remains a challenge to mobilizing collective action. Panelists agreed on some sets of qualities that must be encouraged to facilitate collective action. Building trust is key; large organizations in particular are more inclined to trust the process if the objectives are aligned with their own institutional cultures. Greater knowledge sharing, capacity building and technology transfer should be encouraged. Stakeholders must display patience and a willingness to think beyond disciplinary boundaries for the greater good. “We know that well-managed, thriving landscapes are crucial if we are going to be successful in tackling climate change,” said Karin Kemper of the [World Bank](#).

There was further endorsement for these qualities in a subsequent plenary session in which panelists from diverse backgrounds reflected on their experiences of action on the ground. And while there was agreement that capacity building, trust and patience were important, there was some disagreement on the bottlenecks to progress with Juan Carlos Mendoza of [UNCCD](#) and Christian Kroll of tree-planting search engine [Ecosia](#) respectively suggesting challenges related to supply side capacity and demand side apathy. Further tensions existed with regard to the need for a long-term perspective to action or short-term urgency. It was suggested that greater coordination and stronger alliances between the organizations represented at the GLF could encourage more fruitful dialogue around these issues and help to stimulate more concrete action plans for progress.



Landscape Talks session 1 at GLF Bonn.



Technical solutions for realizing national commitments

Seeds and planting materials

A number of GLF events this year recognized that technical challenges can act as bottlenecks to progress on transforming FLR pledges into action on the ground. As such, there was significant focus placed on identifying established or potential solutions to such technical challenges. Perhaps the most specialized of all the events at GLF was the [very first discussion forum](#) that recognized that the delivery of quality and diverse planting materials is a major constraint to FLR implementation. Ecologist and geneticist Chris Kettle of [Bioversity International](#) moderated this session, framing the problem nicely: are there sufficient and diverse seed and planting materials available within countries to meet restoration pledges, and if not, how can we generate the necessary volume?

Lars Graudal of the [University of Copenhagen](#) reminded attendants of the significance of delivering the FLR agenda, stressing that such nature-based solutions can provide over one third of the climate mitigation solution between now and 2030. However, currently one of the main barriers to restoration success is the lack of a delivery system for diverse, adapted and high-quality native tree seeds and planting materials – there is often a discrepancy between the amount of trees proposed to be planted and the available germplasm. And this is due to major bottlenecks, both on the supply side through insufficient production of the material needed and insufficient extension of know-how, and a demand-side lack of awareness of the benefits that can be realized. With some parallels

“Africa alone has 800 native food tree species. This huge potential needs to be preserved and harnessed to improve nutrition and livelihoods”



Ramni Jamnadass,
ICRAF

to the comments of the plenary, the panelists then suggested that what is needed is not just resilient supply, but also resilient demand. In order to achieve these dual targets, there need to be better linkages between local producers, markets and the private sector.

Further challenges were identified throughout the course of the panel discussion as participants reflected on experiences across the tropics. Although Burkina Faso has a well-established community seed bank, recent tree planting programs have seen a survival rate of just 35 percent, and forest loss nationally is approximately 10,000 hectares per year. This comes aside an ambitious FLR commitment of 5 million hectares. In Rwanda, Charles Karangwa of [IUCN](#) identified that in order to meet Rwanda’s border-to-border restoration target, the country will need to address its current institutional framework; in the last 25 years there

has been no specific tree seed research, so no new species have been identified. Typically the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources deals with crops and the Ministry of Environment with standing forest, so there is a “tree seed gap.”

Meanwhile, in Paraguay, biologist Vania Almos suggested that a lack of local knowledge, restricted access and bureaucracy are getting in the way and stalling FLR. For example, in one internationally funded agroforestry restoration program, farmers had access to the right species but a lack of knowledge (and technical and financial assistance after funding expired) on how to germinate the wild seeds. Finally, a suggestion came from the audience when a smallholder farmer from Nepal claimed that the issue is not a lack of capacity or awareness (they know how to grow trees and why) but a lack of access to Western scientific advances and access to markets.

Doug Maguire of [FAO](#) provided some sobering remarks on the need for urgency in the FLR agenda, suggesting that we must take care in moving fast to not take shortcuts. There is a perception that we are still stuck on the physical targets – how many hectares can we restore? – but we must also consider for what purpose restoration is planned, such as biophysical progress, ecosystem services, livelihood development and food security. If these questions are not answered, then there is a risk that the front end (what to plant and where) is given insufficient consideration.

By the close of the session, there seemed to be consensus on a few key issues. There is a need to address the capacity issue within countries, and a need to raise awareness of the ‘connection’ issue as people continue to operate within their silos. We need more integrated systems that bridge policy, research and practice gaps with an emphasis on the development and reinforcement of value chains that will complement the technical options and interventions becoming available. In taking a more integrated approach, there is also a need to address the drivers of degradation in these landscapes; these need to be understood and considered in conjunction with restoration activities. If we don’t understand the drivers, we risk making the same mistakes in the future.

Beyond tropical forests: Dryland and savannah landscapes from Brazil to Kazakhstan

A [later session](#) that focused on FLR in the dryland areas of Caucasus and Central Asia certainly helped to identify some of the key drivers of forest and landscape degradation within the region. With experience from South Korea, Estonia, Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Iran, the panelists offered the following list of drivers: fuelwood removal, uncontrolled grazing, climate induced drought, unsustainable timber harvesting, overexploitation of non-timber forest products (NTFPs), wildfires, lack of education on forest and agricultural management practices, extensive crop cultivation on steep slopes, water extraction for agriculture, perverse policy (for example, farmers are unable to cut trees unless there is fire outbreak, so they start a fire), lack of alternative income opportunities and unstable tourism.

With assistance from the floor working in breakout groups, this interactive session then set out identifying the key restoration guidelines that can serve to move FLR pledges to action. Collectively the group suggested a range of actions including: seeing more policy action, harnessing more funding for FLR, engagement with the private sector, working in partnerships (academia, donors, private sector, government etc.), halting degradation, conserving and rehabilitating existing native forest, planting forests and agroforests where trees are lacking, and adapting to future climate realities. Finally, Paola Agostini of the World Bank suggested that it was time for those engaged in the FLR agenda to increase their ambition and focus efforts beyond the tropics to incorporate dryland forests, and particularly those

“The Landscape Movement has done wonders in Latin America and Africa. It is now time to move to Caucasus and Central Asia to help implement the Astana Resolution”



Paola Agostini,
World Bank



Burkinabe farmer and 2019 Right Livelihood Award winner Yacouba Sawadogo.

of continental Asia, into restoration efforts. “In our work, we are really trying to focus on opportunities but also on challenges,” said Agostini. She further raised the possibility of having a future GLF event in the drylands of Central Asia and also for an Asia-focused restoration agenda for which the GLF could help generate momentum.

Another such regional focus was provided in [a discussion forum](#) that explicitly focused on sustainable landscape management in Brazil’s savannah, known as the Cerrado, and the Brazilian Forest Code. With reflections from program implementers and participants both, this session offered an assessment of the rural environmental registry – an environmental protection program based on low-carbon agricultural development. Coordinated by the Brazilian Forest Service, the program now extends to 5,600 families and has seen 400,000 hectares of land registered. The program initially encountered resistance from local farmers, but once the benefits were appreciated (access to agricultural credit, training and extension services and ability to join the environmental regularization program), there was huge support from local communities. Community members explained that through capacity building programs of one to two years, they have been able to adopt low-carbon agricultural technologies to regenerate pastures, establish floodwater detention and retention basins, and develop integrated crop-livestock-forest systems that have led to increased yields on the same land area. Yet Francisco Chagas, from the country’s Quilombola settlement, summarized how the core of the program must go beyond mere aid for local communities: “It’s more than just agriculture production. It’s a holy relationship that we have with land.”

Despite the relative success of the program, participants identified some challenges based on their experiences to inform the FLR agenda going forward. In particular, there were concerns related to governance and monitoring with questions raised about how to ensure, economic, social and environmental sustainability; integrate stakeholder objectives; oversee who does the monitoring; and include social considerations within monitoring and evaluation protocols. To overcome such issues, it was suggested that well-planned FLR pilot projects could be useful to alleviating future scaling-up challenges.

The landscape approach: Bringing a concept to life

One of [the final discussion forums](#) also grappled with the technical challenges associated with implementing and scaling up landscape approaches. In a highly interactive session that saw multiple rounds of audience interventions, the participants paid particular attention to the challenge of engaging stakeholders across large landscapes that typically operate within their traditional silos. The panelists brought together vast experience from Asia, Africa and Latin America and clearly emphasized the complexity – and the need to embrace such complexity – of tropical landscapes. Musonda Mumba of [UN Environment](#) reflected on her experiences in Peru, Nepal, Uganda and Kenya, stressing that landscape issues cannot be tackled in isolation and that implementers of landscape approaches must build awareness of the interconnections within landscapes, such as actions of upstream producers having impacts on downstream users. Part of that awareness-raising

comes from enhancing the understanding of the climatic and non-climatic drivers that influence change within a landscape, and then generating a shared sense of concern around a particular topic.

Mirjam Ros-Tonen of the [University of Amsterdam](#) explained that one way to build this shared concern is by working through more localized interventions and using these as entry points to broader landscape issues and approaches. Ros-Tonen attempted this in two separate interventions in Ghana: one sustainable supply chain approach led by the private sector and one adaptive co-management scheme aimed at wildlife conservation and livelihood improvement in off-reserve areas. Based on five design principles – and an integrated approach targeting multiple objectives, based on multi-stakeholder negotiation, polycentric nested governance, capacity building and adaptive capacity (willingness to change) – both interventions had mixed success but shared the conclusion that landscape approaches can build on local initiatives of promise and seek to identify potential partnerships with other actors in the landscape that will facilitate scaling efforts up.

Having worked with over 50 integrated landscape initiatives and recently coordinated a review of 428 examples across four continents, Sara Scherr of [EcoAgriculture Partners](#) was perhaps the panel member most experienced with the landscape approach. She identified that each landscape is unique, and while landscape approaches can be highly variable with different entry points and modalities, they typically share a few key characteristics. Therefore, it is important to look beyond labels in use and focus on assessing progress over the longer term, noting that such approaches ought to be thinking far beyond the typical project cycle.

“17 SDGs need to be accomplished in every landscape”



Sara Scherr,
EcoAgriculture Partners



Youth participants at the event.

Taking a more grassroots perspective, Roderick Zagt of [Tropenbos International](#) explained how his organization focused on civil society organizations (CSOs) trying to make the voice of local communities heard. In doing so, they established 16 landscape approach projects in 9 countries, with an agenda to produce problem, baseline and gender analyses. They found that this tactic provided a rich understanding of the landscape and a robust theory of change – but, alas, not an integrated landscape management plan. In response, Tropenbos encouraged the CSOs and local community participants to try to think more systematically about the decision-making and governance processes of the landscape. This enabled local people to consider more abstract concepts such as transparency, coordination and social cohesion that then allowed more open discussion with investors, government officials, large-scale corporations and conservationists – actors typically not engaged in local planning despite their shared interest in the landscape. Another important outcome was that Tropenbos realized that they, as much as possible, must restrain their own biases when determining the key challenges and solutions in the landscape. As Zagt explained: “We are not true stakeholders in the landscape, the true owners of the problems within the landscape and those living within the landscape. Those with the answers are also within the landscape. We should simply offer mechanisms to facilitate problem identification and solution development.”



Other panelists agreed with these sentiments, with Scherr adding that landscape approaches really need to be owned by locals, as this is their deal and their future. The ambition is – and experience has shown – that stakeholder dialogue processes will be able to function independently of donor funding and external support; the participants should get to a position whereby they use the external support and funding that comes and goes as a resource to feed into their process, rather than external actors trying to create a process into which the participants try and fit.

However, some challenges remain, and none more so than scaling-up as Mumba identified. In part, this is because even within countries, actors within different landscapes are not talking to each other. Regional economic bodies could serve as a potential leverage point for scaling up, but currently we are not utilizing these platforms as knowledge forums to share experiences. Mumba suggested that the GLF could act as a consolidator of experiences from the various organizations participating in its charter and events, to provide guidance and connection among actors working on similar issues or in the same landscape areas.



Interactive activities in between plenaries.



Reshaping the business and finance landscape

“To understand how countries become wealthier in a sustainable way, we need to go beyond their gross domestic product and take into account their natural capital”



Karin Kemper,
World Bank

“The world is losing an estimated USD 6.3 trillion to land degradation every year, but nobody seems to even blink to that. Restoring 300 million hectares of land by 2030 as established by the Bonn Challenge could have a return of USD 7 to 20 for each dollar invested. So if the cost of inaction is way bigger than the cost of action, why is it not happening?”

Against the backdrop of these numbers presented by Nasi from CIFOR, many sessions discussed ways to make sustainable landscapes attractive for private investment and business intervention. Given the indispensable role of private actors and finance in restoring and safeguarding sustainable landscapes, [UN Environment](#)’s Satya S. Tripathi made clear that “we need to step out of our comfort zone and find ways to collaborate with private actors, even with those who are misbehaving, so we can get them on the right track.”

A turning point toward sustainable supply chains

With 70 percent of tropical deforestation rooted in unsustainable agriculture, [greening supply chains](#) from production to consumption was among the most prominent themes of the Bonn event. Assembling leading enterprises, researchers and public entities, the participants discussed three core strategies to achieve this: changing consumer behavior, supporting producers in low-income countries in developing investible projects, and ensuring traceability in commodity supply chains

Several initiatives are now emerging to push responsible production and consumption forward. As Cortez highlighted, business impact should not be exclusively for the sake of profitability; touching people’s hearts is equally important. It is likewise imperative to change how we perceive degraded landscapes, shifting them from business risks to investment opportunities. In this context, Nigel Sizer from [Rainforest Alliance](#) is convinced,

“Supply chain companies are interested in forest landscape restoration to improve their reputation and in response to consumer demand”



Mirjam Kuzee,
IUCN



“Ensuring the future production of commodities, especially in the face of climate change, is a survival imperative for agribusinesses”



Christopher Stewart,
Olam International

“driving more incentives down commodity supply chains would accelerate progress while helping to address entrenched rural poverty.” Sustainable [wood value chains](#) in combination with forest landscape conservation and restoration can, for instance, address both the timber and fire wood deficit in Africa, while safeguarding the remaining pristine forests and positively impacting rural lives that are particularly prone to climate change and outmigration.

However, as Christopher Stewart from [Olam International](#) pinpointed, the status quo might never change unless we move away from looking at projects alone and instead take a more systemic view. Currently no market mechanism or international policy is in place to ensure that commodity production at large, or at least at jurisdictional levels covering multiple products, is and stays sustainable. Traceability remains among the key challenges for the private sector interested in green investment in agricultural and wood products.

Given the limited scope of existing certification schemes to enhance traceability across farms, the new Verified Sourcing Areas (VSA) market mechanism brought into discussions by the [Sustainable Trade Initiative](#) (IDH) offers a much-debated solution to the challenge. VSAs help public, private and civil society stakeholders verify the sustainability of an entire production area, including targets related to forest and peat protection, labor security, land tenure, governance and transparency. Open to everyone, “this approach aims to establish a direct link between producing regions and committed end buyers,” said IDH’s Willem Klaassens. The mechanism includes the VSA Global Performance Standard, which will be launched

for consultation in July 2019. The [Cocoa & Forests Initiative](#) by IDH or a new certification program by Rainforest Alliance are other examples that were discussed with regard to building ties and trust between public and private actors in value chains.

Nothing less than “radical visionary leadership in companies, communities and government bodies” are needed for accelerating such initiatives, said Dorothea Pio from [Flora & Fauna International](#), highlighting that for the long-term survival of forest and high conservation sites, it is critical to align the needs and ambitions of the private sector with those of communities. Only in doing so will we become less reliant on short-term funding. Teaming up with locals is vital for many companies, to integrate into processes beyond farm gates, address sustainability issues at the landscape level, and support a co-existence of thriving rural communities and ecosystems. In this spirit, Olam International is building a ‘living landscapes policy’ into their commercial models.

From small to big investments in Forest and Landscape Restoration

For funding the restoration of the world’s degraded lands, including for the trillions of seeds needed, it seems a major contribution will have to come from private institutions and companies, including in efforts beyond sustainable supply chains. However, as the 2018 progress [report](#) on the [New York Declaration on Forests](#) finds, currently 40 times more subsidies and investments are made in driving deforestation

“Currently there is more interest by investors to be involved in sustainable projects, but these projects need to be quick [...], and they need to be less uncertain”



Dureen Shahnaz,
Impact Investment Exchange



Speakers in the all-female Youth Plenary.

than in protecting the world's precious and rapidly deteriorating forest landscapes. So how can we turn the tide and see big money invested in the right ways and places?

Presented as an enterprise that creates jobs, timber products, ecosystem services and company benefits, FLR can indeed be an attractive business case in the view of Hiroto Mitsugi of FAO's Forestry Department. Moreover, FLR helps deliver progress on multiple SDGs at once. Another key factor for private sector engagement is the streamlining and consolidation of restoration guidelines. Multiple methodologies promoted by different institutions are not only confusing but also highly unattractive to private investors. The wise use of public seed finance – for example, to de-risk restoration projects and to make them 'investment-ready' – will help mobilize private funders. 'Structured funds,' with cake-like layers and different levels of risks attached were brought up by Sylvia Wisniwski from [Finance in Motion](#) as one way to bring in more private finance.

On the whole, the financial system needs change, be it to better value social and environmental impacts of investments or to accommodate the long-term orientation of landscape-related investments. Small investments targeted at earlier project stages and at farm level, are seen as the most relevant in terms of creating real incentives and hence impacts on the grounds. Increased working capital can financially empower smallholders, landowners and private actors to engage in more sustainable land use practices. At the same time, these investments bear disproportionally high transaction costs and temporally induced uncertainties, which makes them highly unattractive for most big investors.

Apart from impact investments, hardly any investment types fit the peculiarities of rural landscapes. As such, partnerships between public and private stakeholders are among the most important strategic tools for keeping restoration and conservation activities with local communities and small companies attractive for private finance. In this context, three funds and initiatives in support of greening production were discussed in the UN Environment–organized side event: [&Green](#), a fund by the Norwegian Government and Unilever supported by IDH that helps companies apply a jurisdictional approach in their operations; [Rabobank's Agri3 fund](#), 'Forests, Farmers, Food,' that promotes 'more food with less deforestation'; and the [Tropical Landscape Finance Facility](#) that leverages private finance for the public good.

These funding approaches mark an important first step in driving systemic change towards a "financial system that is more accountable of people and planet's needs" and that achieves "impact at scale, not only capital at scale," said Durreen Shahnaz of [Impact Investment Exchange](#). In this vein, investments into large-scale plantations or eco-tourism, for example, that fail in benefitting local communities or even destroy existing socioeconomic structures and markets must be abandoned. Together with de-risking financial structures, good governance with clear land rights and adequate legal, institutional and policy guidance on integrated approaches to restoration, conservation, production and investments will be essential for meeting the needs of investors, local communities and indigenous peoples in tandem. Even more so, as Jürgen Blaser from the [University of Bern](#) rightly stressed: "Even if we focus on plantations and productive landscapes, we must also restore degraded forests into natural ones. We should not forget that."



“Tea companies are now investing in protecting the forest because they have realized it determines the microclimate their plantations depend on”



Daan Wensing,
IDH

The degradation of the world’s forest landscapes advances, but so do the efforts of those determined to find solutions. It seems that many business actors no longer want to be involved in nature’s destruction and, rather, wish to be part of the solution. Protecting ecosystems and supporting producers’ livelihoods is often in the self-interest of companies and investors – another key cornerstone for gradually transforming investments, trade and consumption.

Acting in landscapes: The role of collaboration, empowerment and trust

It was on more than one occasion that speakers echoed the words of Schmitz: “We are not challenged by a lack of knowledge, we are challenged to act.” Governance and decision-making processes are critical for a successful move to action. Against the backdrop of rather slow and modest progress at the international level, the world has truly turned its focus to national and lower-level policies highlighting the agency of counties, districts and especially local communities. Acting from the bottom-up as well as the top-down in a mutually constitutive manner is seen as key. From the top-down, a conducive institutional environment and legal framework is one key component of good landscape governance (e.g. the subsidized fixed prize that allows bamboo-based bioenergy in western Indonesia to be purchased at reasonable prices). Getting rid of perverse policies that undermine the Sustainable Development Goals

is as important as strengthening inter-ministerial collaboration or securing land and resource rights for locals within landscapes, to help avoid land grabbing, resource depletion and human rights violations.

Changing the political culture in different government segments seems like a mammoth task, and often policy reforms and initiatives that work in one country might not be easily applicable in another, even if the problem is the same. Eventually, it will be critical to rest hope not only on the public sector, and participants throughout the conference raised the great potential of decentralizing authority and organizing governance from the bottom up, in participatory and inclusive ways. Also a territorial approach to landscapes lends itself much better to the realities on the ground, and the jurisdictional approach was among the most commonly discussed policy approaches at the GLF event. ‘Zooming in’ seems to help integrate relevant sectors and visions of different actors to better support the social, ecological and economic development of their territories.

Local communities and indigenous peoples’ rights, values and knowledge for powerful action

Coordinating and integrating different actors in landscapes needs to pay heed to the cultural importance of landscapes for local and indigenous peoples. Initiatives that disrespect the cultural

“Let’s treasure and help community-based organizations to contribute to large scale restoration, rather than trying to deliver our big commitments from the top down”



Paul Laird,
ITF

“The world is more youthful than ever, The youth are the future and a source of innovation and creativity”



Sooyeon Laura Jin,
FAO

identities linked to the land or disempower people, especially indigenous groups or women whose survival depends on the land, are doomed to fail. “We do need to bring women front and center, because without women, frankly, I don’t think there would be any planet left,” said Shahnaz.

Not only is the respect for local and indigenous cultural heritage, rights, values and knowledge a matter of cultural sensitivity, it also marks a major key to success. Approaches like the farmer managed natural regeneration (FMNR), which impressively helped restore 200 million trees in Africa over the last decades without legal intervention or external financial support, or the fact that 80 percent of the world’s remaining biodiversity is to be found in broadly undisturbed communal and indigenous lands, clearly prove the power, experience, skills and will of local people to act. “Forests managed by indigenous people are better managed than forest managed by the state,” said Joan Carling of the Indigenous Peoples Major Group for Sustainable Development.

This showcases [how important it is](#) to not only engage communities, but to put them in the driver’s seat in landscape projects and efforts. While striving for increased capacities of local communities for sustainable land management or restoration might be justified in some places of the world, it will be likewise important to be aware of and open to the richness of knowledge held by local communities and indigenous peoples. This is equally true for restoration, protected area

or land use policies, planning or management frameworks that have to be receptive to the cultural norms and values of the traditional communities they govern. Listening to and integrating local narratives and thinking in new and more inclusive ways will be critical in policy, science and practice.

Rejuvenating action for sustainable landscapes

As in past GLF events, youth engagement was stressed as indispensable for moving from commitment to action. Youth is not only well-equipped, highly committed and well-connected, but also passionate and creative in taking responsibility. Capitalizing on the innovative thinking and energy of young people, initiatives like AFR100 are increasingly recruiting youth for scaling action across borders. Getting youth excited about innovative approaches to sustainable land use, green supply chains and restoration efforts is an ‘easy bet’ because of the tangible employment and livelihood options they offer, especially for young people in rural areas. With further financial support, capacity building and trainings disseminated around the world through Vlogs, free online educational platforms and other social media tools, the youth movement seems unstoppable. However, its full power only unfolds if other sectors and generations join and allow young people to lead the process by example.

“Herding cats is difficult, herding human even more so - herding human towards sustainability targets will be much easier though if they are presented as opportunities and not burdens”



Gita Syahrani,
Sustainable Districts Platform



A 'speed-dating' networking session. Photo by Jessica Ball/GLF

Building a common landscape narrative

With more than 13 million hectares to be restored annually for achieving the varied commitments under the Bonn Challenge and its regional spin-offs, nothing less than a radical paradigm shift in thinking is required that brings a vast array of stakeholders from government, science, civil society, business and finance to act and work together. It implies arduous, disruptive and time intensive working toward overcoming business-as-usual practices, differences in worldviews as well as conflicts of interest when actors who have never been partnered before begin collaborating. For such radical change, the build-up of collaborative leadership that enables dialogue and trust between all relevant actors is key. Clarity about a common vision and focus, communication skills, transparency, competence, confidence and consistency are important for building trust. Transparency tools, such as the [explorer.land](#) tool or Plant-for-the-Planet's new digital platform might be highly conducive for increasing the level of trust of landscape governance more generally. The Participatory and Negotiated Territorial Development (PNTD) approach introduced by FAO, for instance, not only implements a territorial management agenda, but also enhances trust building and social cohesion.

With clarity on the know-how of restoration, land management and conservation, a skillfully articulated collective landscape story often seems like the missing link for greening the mindscapes for scaled action on the ground, especially for reaching those outside the 'environment bubble.' Opportunities for cross border learning about 'proven' approaches in landscape restoration, management, conservation, governance and financing – such as through the [Panorama](#) platform, massive open online courses or the new GLF [Landscape Academy](#) – are a complementary approach to further spread and nourish this shared landscapes narrative.



Reinhard Limbach, deputy mayor of Bonn, speaks in the Opening Plenary.



On and off-site learning and exchange activities

What participants at GLF events most value is the face-to-face exchange and extended networking possibilities. People are keen to connect, engage and hear from others. Three speed-dating sessions, a 'jingle and mingle' after-hours networking session, and mentoring activities built on a 'conversational menu' offered plenty of opportunities for informal inter-generational and cross-sector interaction. Moreover, the GLF Bonn 2018 saw the launch of the GLF Learning Pavilion for people to share their educational products and actively learn in one-hour interactive workshops. Given the overwhelming interest in the pavilion, it was complemented by an 'Action Pavilion' with extra exhibition space and more workshop opportunities. Together with the Inclusive Finance and Business Engagement Pavilion, the pavilions offered space to 36 booths and 36 workshops, with hundreds of visitors and participants. Participants enjoyed the intimate atmosphere and the possibility for personal in-depth conversations and true exchange.

In practical hands-on workshops participants could obtain soft skills such as how to facilitate a multi-stakeholder dialogue alongside practical knowledge on how to grow [bamboo](#) or create a mushroom business plan. The aforementioned GLF Landscape Academy also launched at the event, with 536 people from 104 different countries already enrolled in the GLF [Landscape Leadership](#) course and another 434 from 86 countries in the GLF [Landscape Governance](#) course.

Prior to the event, 19 participants from 6 continents took part in the [Think Climate Smart Landscapes](#) course held in Bonn in partnership with the Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation, which focused on assessing landscapes' climate change vulnerabilities and their capabilities to adapt and change. Over the course of five days, participants analyzed each other's landscape cases using interactive tools and devised innovative ideas for climate action at the landscape level. The results of the work were presented during the event at a Learning Pavilion workshop.

To go beyond our business-as-usual ways and create a future with healthy and equitable landscapes, we must embody and practice collaborative landscape leadership. The GLF, in partnership with the [Youth in Landscapes Initiative](#) (YiL), therefore designed and delivered a two-day workshop to provide 40 promising young individuals from 20 countries with the tools to become powerful and effective leaders. Following a packed agenda on facilitation, design and pitching of projects, participants formed thematic groups to design and deliver workshops in the GLF Learning and Action Pavilions covering key landscape issues.



The GLF Landscape Academy, an online learning platform, launched at the event.



Participants of the pre-event Think Climate Smart Landscapes course held in Bonn. Photo by Cora van Oosten/GLF

Landscape Learning Pavilion – Link and Learn

Global Landscapes Forum with:

- Wageningen University
- Netherlands Space Office (NSO)
- IUFRO
- Tropenbos International
- NTFP Philippines
- Asian Pacific Forest Network
- University of Freiburg
- UN Environment
- Youth in Landscapes
- IUCN
- GPFLR
- International Union for Conservation of Nature Law Office
- University of Kisangani (UNIKIS), DR Congo
- CIFOR
- SAR Vision
- International Network on Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR)
- International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

Landscape Action Pavilion – Dare to Share

Global Landscapes Forum with:

- Youth in Landscapes Initiative/ YPARD
- Open Forests
- CIFOR
- Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda
- Embassy of the Earth
- Indigenous Peoples Major Group (IPMG)
- CAMBISOL
- JustDiggIt
- ECOSTAR
- Non-Timber Forest Products Philippines
- GIZ

Inclusive Finance and Business Engagement Pavilion

Landscapes for People, Food and Nature Initiative with:

- FSC International
- Tropenbos International
- CGIAR's Forest, Trees and Agroforestry Research Program
- SNV
- Solidaridad
- Verra
- the Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL) of the Netherlands
- IUCN Netherlands
- EcoAgriculture Partners



In conclusion



Ms. Honorine Uwase Hirwa speaking in the side event “The Future of AFR100”

Be it in new financial mechanisms or uses of bamboo, ways of ensuring communities are actively making decisions best for them or giving youth leadership experience in the global arena, nearly every speaker and panellists maintained the sentiment that it’s time for ‘out with the old, in with the new’ in many facets of landscapes – and mindscapes – worldwide. The GLF charter signing, multiple all-women panels and innumerable inspiring presentations of new ideas, inventions and research demonstrated that positive change is possible and is happening, but more efforts need to be rapidly taken in order to secure a more sustainable future. “We have to be defiant in what we are trying to achieve,” said Shahnaz, summing what had been discussed in different forms and fashions throughout the two days.



Committing to action.



All photos by Pilar Valbuena/GLF, unless otherwise noted.



The Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) is the world's largest knowledge-led multi-sectoral platform for integrated land use, bringing together world leaders, scientists, private sector representatives, farmers and community leaders and civil society to accelerate action toward the creation of more resilient, equitable, profitable and climate-friendly landscapes. The Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), UN Environment and The World Bank launched the Forum in Warsaw in 2013, alongside the UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP). With core funding provided by the Government of Germany, GLF is entering its next five-year phase with the launch of a movement of 1 billion people toward the creation of sustainable landscapes.

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Charter members



Participating organizations

