



RESTORING AFRICA'S DRYLANDS
ACCELERATING ACTION ON THE GROUND



FROM COMMUNITY-LED RESTORATION TO CARBON-ENHANCING LANDSCAPES

An interactive discussion at GLF Africa 2021

#GLFAfrica



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WHITE PAPER



COMMUNITIES AS PART OF THE BIGGER RESTORATION PICTURE

Restoring Africa's drylands is key to achieving food security, climate change adaptation, and the protection of biodiversity; both on the continent itself and as part of a contribution to global restoration ambitions. The UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) estimates that 65% of land in Africa is affected by degradation, and 3% of GDP is lost annually from soil and nutrient depletion on cropland.

Major initiatives to accelerate land restoration – such as the [African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative](#) (AFR100), or the [Land Degradation Neutrality](#) (LDN) target under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – cannot succeed without recognizing and further empowering the efforts of smallholder farmers, pastoralists, women, and other local land users. These community-based actors have the most to lose from degraded land and soils, as they are largely dependent on healthy soils and tree cover, as well as secure access to water. All of this is increasingly threatened by accelerating climate change. Yet, through farmer-managed natural regeneration, watershed management, and other efforts at the local level, these communities are doing their best to sustainably manage the natural resources upon which they depend for their survival.

Super-imposing large-scale landscape restoration initiatives, without considering these important local efforts, can jeopardize legitimate rights to land and other natural resources. It is not only critical to secure the land-tenure

rights of women, Indigenous communities, young people, and other marginalized land users, but to also ensure that ecosystem restoration strategies build the capacities of affected communities in order to adapt to a changing climate, by blending traditional knowledge with context-appropriate scientific analysis and technical solutions.

CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR COMMUNITY-LED SOIL AND LAND RESTORATION

The GLF Africa 2021 conference session 'From community-led restoration to carbon-enhancing landscapes' will highlight lessons from successful community-led soil and land restoration projects in several African countries that have created tangible benefits for communities and ecosystems. Discussions will outline knowledge-sharing models that enhance access to context-specific data and practical toolkits for restoration, as well as community-led social innovations that help tackle structural barriers to equitable land rights and other governance challenges. The discussions will further develop practical insights for restoration pathways that simultaneously address social, technical, economic, and institutional barriers to the sustainable use of land, water, energy, and other natural resources. Speakers will also showcase entry points for win-win restoration approaches that incentivize private investments in the sustainable management of shared natural resources.



OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

Organized around two interactive panel discussions, this GLF Africa session aims to:

- Highlight proven restoration practices at the community level that have potential to provide innovative pathways for landscape-level restoration by co-developing and scaling contextual solutions with farmers, civil society, governments and the private sector.
- Demonstrate how context-specific soil degradation monitoring tools can contribute to informed decision-making to combat land degradation at local and ecosystem levels.
- Contribute to the growing evidence base and toolkits on practical solutions for sustainable soil and land management that can be adapted and/or scaled up in different landscape settings.
- Demonstrate how the implementation of innovative nature-based solutions at the local level provides new impetus to restoration ambitions such as AFR100, the Bonn Challenge, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NSBAPs), Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), and other targets linked to the 2030 Agenda.

PARTNERS

The session is co-organized by:

- TMG Think Tank for Sustainability
- ICRAF
- WWF International

REFERENCES

- FAO. 2012. [Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security](#)
- TMG Research. 2020. [From the Bottom Up: Investment Guide for creating an enabling environment for sustainable land management](#)
- TMG Research. 2020. [Systemic Challenges, Systemic Responses. Innovating Adaptation to Climate Change through Agroecology](#)
- UNCCD Science-Policy Interface. 2019. [Creating an Enabling Environment for Land Degradation Neutrality and its Potential Contribution to Enhancing Well-being, Livelihoods and the Environment](#)
- UNCCD COP 14. 2019. [Final Decision on Land Tenure](#)

USEFUL WEBSITES

- [Regreening Africa](#): A collaborative initiative to scale-up evergreen agriculture, using locally appropriate techniques including Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration
- [soilmates.org](#): A TMG Research project exploring social innovations to protect soils and empower people.

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

GLF Africa Digital Conference 2021 would not be possible without the support and participation of the following hosts, partners and organizations. For a full list of everyone involved, please visit: events.globallandscapesforum.org/africa-2021/partners

GLOBAL LANDSCAPES FORUM

The Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) is the world's largest knowledge-led platform on integrated land use, dedicated to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Climate Agreement. The Forum takes a holistic approach to create sustainable landscapes that are productive, prosperous, equitable and resilient and considers five cohesive themes of food and livelihoods, landscape restoration, rights, finance and measuring progress. It is led by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), in collaboration with its co-founders UNEP and the World Bank and Charter Members.

Charter Members: CIAT, CIFOR, CIRAD, Climate Focus, Conservation International, Crop Trust, EcoAgriculture Partners, EFI, Evergreen Agriculture, FSC, GEF, GIZ, ICIMOD, IFOAM - Organics International, ILRI, INBAR, IPMG, IUFRO, Rainforest Alliance, Rare, RRI, SAN, TMG - Think Tank for Sustainability, UNEP, Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation, part of Wageningen Research, WFO, World Agroforestry, World Bank Group, WRI, WWF International, Youth in Landscapes Initiative



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