



YOUTH PARTICIPATION AT GLF AFRICA DIGITAL CONFERENCE: A WAVE OF OPPORTUNITIES

RESTORING AFRICA'S DRYLANDS ACCELERATING ACTION ON THE GROUND

2-3 JUNE 2021

Young people are emerging as the vanguard of a growing movement to restore degraded landscapes in Africa. With a median age of [19.7 years](#), Africa's diverse population is much younger than that of any other continent in the world. These unique demographics offer a significant advantage in the drive to revive its ecosystems and safeguard people's livelihoods.



Median age of Africa's population:
19.7 years

Efforts to mitigate and adapt to the effects of a warming planet are gaining a welcome boost from the abundant energy and commitment of Africa's youth, which is projected to number 1.2 billion by 2030. The transformation of economies along the path to a decarbonized world will also require young, dynamic workforces that are up to the challenge of restoring land on the African continent.



Projected African youth population by 2030:
1.2 billion

The [2021-2030 UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#) presents an ideal opportunity to tap the growing interest of Africa's youth in landscape restoration activities. Almost half of Africa's surface is categorized as drylands, which are home to about 500 million people, or roughly 50 percent of the continent's population, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.



Drylands occupy **almost half** of Africa's land surface

Drylands provide jobs and livelihoods for millions of people, who depend primarily on rain-fed agriculture and livestock husbandry for their survival. However, these water-scarce landscapes in Africa are prone to degradation due to the intensification of agricultural production, mining, infrastructure development and urbanization. Climate change, armed conflicts and the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic are exacerbating this process.



About **50%** of Africa's population lives on drylands

GLF Africa Digital Conference

The Global Landscapes Forum is organizing the first-ever conference focused entirely on African drylands. [GLF Africa: Restoring Africa's Drylands](#) will address the urgent need to rapidly increase and improve efforts to restore the world's drylands, almost half of which are located in Africa.

This conference will serve as the perfect forum for young people to connect with each other, share their work and network with other organizations. They will also have the opportunity to create new partnerships, while exploring ways to get involved in restoration activities and to bring positive change to landscapes on the African continent. What's more, 50 young people have been paired with a mentor to receive guidance on their career and to create a supportive connection that will last beyond the conference.

At least 70 percent of the conference's registered participants are students and young professionals aged from 18 to 35 years, with more than 3000 individuals from 90 countries having already signed up. This reflects the eagerness of young Africans to take action and drive change on land restoration activities.

70% of GLF Africa participants are between the ages of **18-35** and come from 90 countries in Africa and around the world



Young people will also be among the speakers or moderators in plenaries and conference sessions, while working behind the scenes as event volunteers. Speakers include ecopreneur [Helina Teklu](#), who is helping restore Ethiopia with her seed bombs; [Fatou Jeng](#), a climate activist who founded the youth-led organization Clean Earth Gambia to focus on climate change, gender and conservation; [Diana Kyalo](#), who is raising awareness about land-tenure rights for youth; and many other young thought leaders from all over Africa.

Youth on the agenda at GLF Africa

During GLF Africa, you will have the opportunity to follow these youth-led sessions twice per day (East Africa Time applies):

Date	Time	Event
2 June	08:30	Young restoration practitioners showcase successful restoration stories .
	13:00	Activists and ecopreneurs talk about dryland restoration as youth job opportunities .
3 June	08:00	We will highlight the amazing role that women play in restoration efforts and the importance of passing on traditional knowledge.
	10:30	An intergenerational plenary about exploring challenges and identifying solutions on land-tenure

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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