

WCC-2016-Res-040-EN

Support for Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) in Africa

RECOGNISING that IUCN has played a central role in developing and promoting forest landscape restoration (FLR) in Africa and beyond, especially through its leadership role in the Bonn Challenge to restore 150 million hectares of deforested and degraded lands by 2020;

ALSO RECOGNISING that, while Africa has contributed only minimally to global climate change, Africans will be among those most affected and that Africa's population is expected to nearly double by 2050, which will see the demand soar for already scarce resources of soil, crops and water;

AWARE that FLR can increase soil fertility and food security, improve availability and quality of water resources, combat desertification, protect and increase biodiversity, create green jobs, bolster economic growth and livelihood diversification, reduce disaster risk, increase the capacity for climate change resilience and adaptation and contribute to climate change mitigation;

NOTING that Africa, according to global analyses by IUCN, the World Resources Institute (WRI), and other IUCN Members, has the largest opportunity for the restoration of mosaic forest landscapes of any continent in the world, i.e. landscapes where the number and/or health of trees in a mosaic of interdependent land uses can be increased;

ALSO NOTING that the African Union endorsed AFR100 (the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative), a country-led effort to bring 100 million hectares of land in Africa into restoration by 2030 while contributing to Vision 2063, the Malabo Declaration on food security, and the Cairo Declaration on Africa's Natural Capital, and therefore provided a continental FLR target, building on current, successful initiatives such as the Great Green Wall Initiative and TerrAfrica, among others;

FURTHER NOTING that AFR100 is a direct contribution to the implementation of the Bonn Challenge and the New York Declaration on Forests, and the African Resilient Landscapes Initiative (ARLI), an initiative to promote integrated landscape management in Africa with the goal of adapting to and mitigating climate change;

AWARE that achieving the AFR100 target depends on a combination of local, national, and international political commitments, coordination between FLR actors, strong safeguards and standards, and sufficient technical and financial support; and

ALSO AWARE that restoration efforts often fail if they do not permanently involve local populations, identify and address specific environmental objectives, include key actors in well-structured decision-making, and inherently generate social and economic benefits;

The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Hawai'i, United States of America, 1-10 September 2016:

1. REQUESTS the Director General to:
 - a. contribute to the success of AFR100 as part of the Bonn Challenge by maintaining a strong focus on FLR consistent with the IUCN Programme 2017-2020;
 - b. provide technical advice and assistance to Members in developing countries in applying the Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology and related tools to assess restoration opportunities and support increased and more effective investment in the implementation of FLR at scale in Africa;
 - c. provide technical advice and assistance to Members in developing environmental and social standards for the implementation of FLR and the achievement of the AFR100 target of fighting climate change, improving human well-being, ecosystem health and biodiversity conservation across Africa; and
 - d. establish cooperation with internationally recognised forest certification schemes with experience on the ground in several parts of Africa (such as the Forest Stewardship Council),

as they can contribute to sustainable management of restored forest areas and increase socio- economic perspectives; and

2. ENCOURAGES governments, civil society organisations, corporations and other private-sector actors, research institutions, investors and the donor community engaged in land use-related interventions in Africa to:

a. recognise that increased programmatic support for, and investment in, FLR produces multiple benefits that contribute to local, national, regional and global environmental and development goals such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification (UNCCD), and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);

b. leverage opportunities for FLR to capture synergies among national and international commitments already made, and FLR initiatives already underway, to address climate change, land degradation, food and water security, biodiversity conservation, and resilience;

c. affirm national FLR commitments as contributions to the AFR100 target of restoring 100 million hectares of deforested and degraded landscapes by 2030;

d. develop strategies for achieving the AFR100 target and mobilising partners as well as technical and financial resources to learn from and scale up restoration successes, with attention to promoting good practices (including the use of native vegetation), facilitating finance, and monitoring progress; and

e. collaborate in developing strategies to advance the use of renewable energy and provision of alternatives to wood fuels that are not being produced in a sustainable manner and therefore contribute to forest degradation and deforestation in many landscapes.