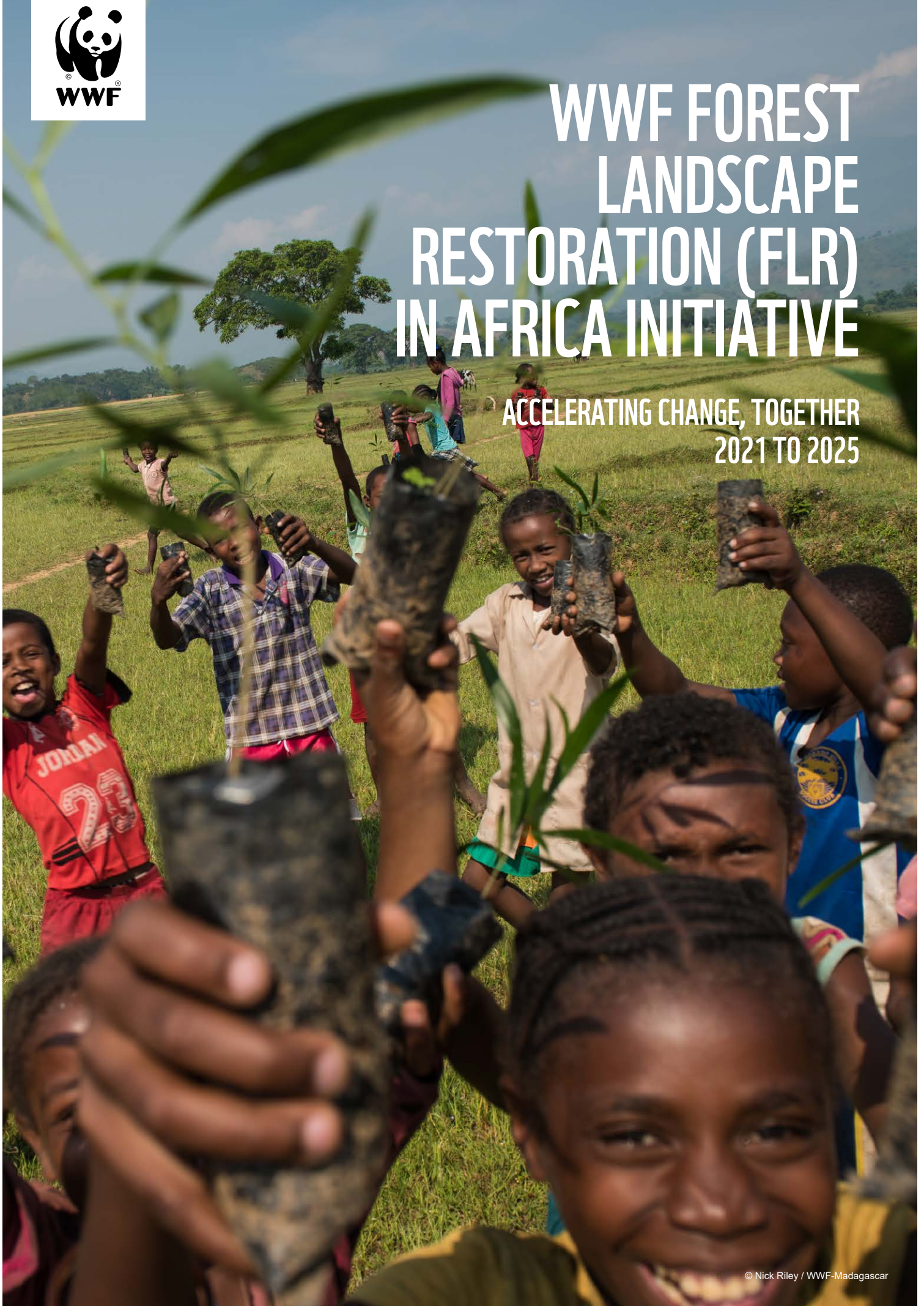




WWF FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION (FLR) IN AFRICA INITIATIVE

ACCELERATING CHANGE, TOGETHER
2021 TO 2025



RESTORATION FOR THE FUTURE: SCALING UP IN AFRICA

The people of Africa are highly dependent on natural resources, with around 70 per cent of the population relying on agriculture and land-based systems for their livelihoods. Of critical concern, thus, is the fact that the unsustainable use of these resources is driving significant environmental degradation. The continent records the highest deforestation rates globally (about 3.9 million hectares annually) and has lost nearly 30 million hectares of forest in the past decade. Meanwhile, large areas of land continue to degrade due to overexploitation and poor land management.

Halting and reversing nature loss are critical steps in securing livelihoods, tackling the climate and biodiversity crises, and building a sustainable, resilient future for all. Now is the time for urgent, scaled-up restoration efforts in Africa.

The [WWF Forest Landscape Restoration \(FLR\) in Africa Initiative](#) (or 'FLR Initiative') is an ongoing, major effort to halt land degradation and deforestation, reverse ecosystem decline, and revive landscapes to achieve meaningful, lasting conservation outcomes. So far, it has helped place more than 18 million hectares of degraded and deforested land- and seascapes under effective restoration in nine African countries.

Between 2021 and 2025, the initiative advanced significantly thanks to partner support. By engaging multi-stakeholder platforms, it helped shape policy and prioritize restoration in national agendas. Together, work was done across multiple land- and seascapes in Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

By supporting knowledge exchange and capacity building, the initiative is enabling local actors and the private sector to strengthen financial and market connections for the effective landscape-level implementation of sustainable land restoration efforts.

But the impact of the initiative extends beyond landscape restoration; we are fostering thriving communities through our efforts, having already benefited approximately 55,000 Indigenous People and local community households directly by 2025. Communities in the areas where we work are developing new sources of livelihoods through beekeeping, eco-spice production, carpentry, ecotourism and other social enterprises. In doing so, they are helping secure their own food, water and resilience for the future, while also helping capture carbon, combat climate change, and secure biodiversity at landscape level.

THE FLR IN AFRICA INITIATIVE, IN NUMBERS



65 million ha
identified for
potential restoration



18 million ha
under restoration
across 9 countries
since 2021



13.5 million ha
restored by 2027



55,000
households benefited
directly from
restoration since
2021



>120,000
people trained
and equipped with
restoration skills by
2025

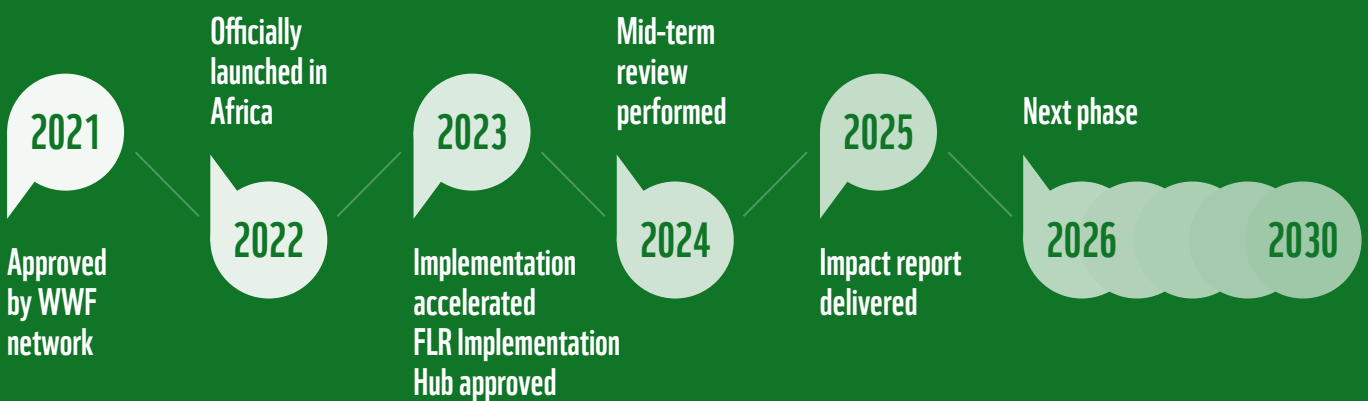


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The United Nations (UN) has declared 2021 to 2030 the [Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#). This type of restoration involves assisting in the recovery of degraded or destroyed ecosystems, and conserving those that are still intact. In Africa, 34 countries thus far have pledged to restore 129.5 million hectares by 2030 as part of the [African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative \(AFR100\)](#). Coordinated regional action is key to leveraging data, finance, policy, and expertise to advance the continent’s restoration vision. In this context, a regional programme such as the FLR Initiative drives restoration at scale.

With partners’ support, by 2030, we can restore 13.5 million hectares – an area half the size of Burkina Faso – to enhance biodiversity conservation, protect ecosystem services, and develop sustainable livelihoods.

INITIATIVE TIMELINE



RESTORATION FOR THE FUTURE

From strategy to delivery, the FLR Initiative strengthens the necessary conditions for ecosystem restoration, unlocks the finance to make it possible, coordinates the landscape-scale implementation of restoration efforts, drives ecosystem recovery, and delivers tangible benefits for people, at scale. Our results prove that ecological connectivity and community prosperity go hand in hand.

However, certain challenges with upscaling our restoration initiative remain significant. Only by matching our efforts to the scale of the challenge can we truly secure a thriving future for both people and nature.

WHY ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION?

- Africa loses approximately 3.9 million hectares of forest each year, and up to 65 per cent of its land area is already degraded. This threatens biodiversity, climate resilience and livelihoods.
- Restoration serves as a powerful nature-based solution that supports climate adaptation and enhances livelihoods.
- Large-scale restoration offers triple benefits: recovering ecosystems, supporting livelihoods, and tackling climate change.



The right approach to landscape restoration depends on the specific ecosystem affected, its level of degradation, the biodiversity that remains, and the long-term processes needed to keep that ecosystem functioning.



THE CONTEXT OF OUR EFFORTS

- The impacts of African forest loss are profound, given that around 70 per cent of the continent's population is dependent on nature for their livelihoods. Forests provide food, firewood, water, medicine, timber, minerals and many other ecosystem goods and services that people benefit from. Forests also act as a carbon sink critical to global climate progress and as economic assets for countries.
- Levels of habitat degradation and biodiversity loss in Africa are severe, and accelerating: between 1970 and 2020, approximately 23 per cent of the continent's land surface degraded and monitored wildlife populations declined by 76 per cent.
- By 2025, the initiative's efforts had brought about 44.5 per cent of the nine countries' government pledges to the AFR100 target under effective restoration, significantly advancing global commitments such as the [Bonn Challenge](#), the [UN's Sustainable Development Goals](#) and the [Global Biodiversity Framework](#).

Land restoration in Africa empowers local communities by reversing soil degradation, restoring food and water security, and creating green jobs.

IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT THE TREES...

Forest landscape restoration isn't just about planting trees – it's also about restoring ecological functions and enhancing human well-being across entire landscapes.

In this regard, our active restoration efforts include ecosystem restoration, reforestation, invasive species removal, erosion control, soil regeneration, sustainable agriculture, and 'passive' restoration under sustainable forest management in collaboration with local communities (as part of village land forest reserves or wildlife management areas, for instance).

Together, these actions create conditions for both ecosystems and people to thrive.



ENABLING CHANGE, SCALING CONSERVATION

The FLR Initiative enables WWF and its partners to scale restoration efforts across priority land- and seascapes through its three main pillars of work. These pillars focus on **policy, governance and global positioning; financing and investment mobilization; and delivery of the AFR100 commitments**, respectively.

1

Policy, governance and
global positioning



2

Financing and
investment mobilization



3

Delivering on the
AFR100 commitments



1

POLICY, GOVERNANCE AND GLOBAL POSITIONING



Land degradation and the water cycle are inextricably linked, with degraded soils heavily diminishing the natural capacity of land to filter and store water.



Building resilience in a drier world requires new approaches to restoration, stewardship and resource governance under shifting baselines.

We are mobilizing land- and seascape restoration at the regional, national and landscape level by strengthening multi-stakeholder platforms that bring together government, civil society, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and the private sector.

The initiative is working closely with governments to ensure that they incorporate land- and seascape restoration within their climate change and development plans and policies. We're also supporting countries in monitoring the progress on their restoration commitments.

PROGRESS MADE

Since 2021, the initiative has strengthened policy and governance in participating countries by embedding restoration commitments into national policy instruments such as [Nationally Determined Contributions](#) (NDCs), [national biodiversity strategies and action plans](#), and [land degradation neutrality targets](#).

Regionally and across the continent, it has elevated Africa's restoration agenda by driving sustained engagement with high-level platforms, including UN conventions, conferences and side events, as well as stakeholder forums.

Collaboration with the AFR100 Secretariat has exceeded our expectations in creating new avenues for policy influence, joint resource mobilization and regional learning exchanges.

This progress has resulted in new partnerships, co-created resource mobilization efforts, as well as strategic agreements, including the landmark collaboration with the [African Development Bank Group](#) (AfDB) to develop a methodology for a restoration adaptation benefit mechanism.

The initiative has also helped integrate the [Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology](#) (ROAM) framework into priority settings and into national strategies for restoration opportunity assessments. This framework helps turn restoration targets for large landscapes into actionable goals and guides restoration efforts for impact at scale.

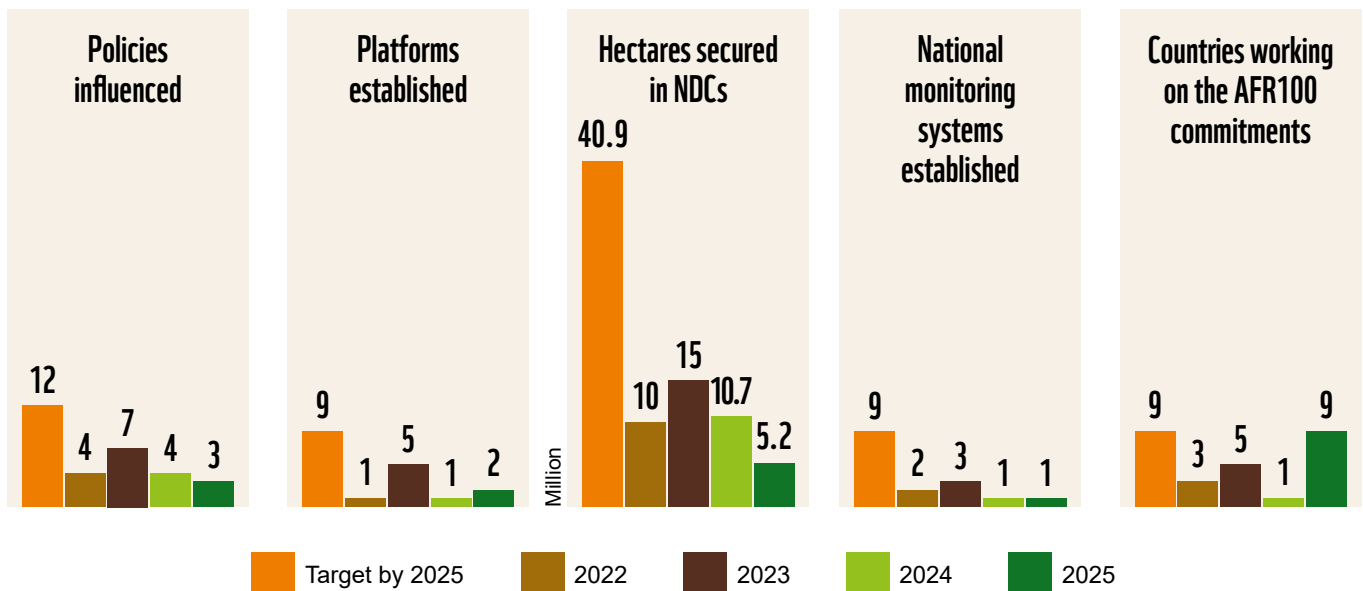
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- WWF is represented on the AFR100 management team.
- The FLR Initiative has supported 15 policy instruments aimed at embedding restoration as a priority in national planning and decision-making.
- The [UN World Restoration Flagships](#) designation was awarded to the WWF for [restoring the Northern Mozambique Channel seascape](#), which spans across the Comoros, Madagascar, Mozambique and Tanzania.
- Over 40.9 million hectares have been formally committed to restoration under countries' NDCs, which affirms the initiative's strong alignment with climate and biodiversity frameworks.
- Seven multi-stakeholder platforms have been established or strengthened to ensure that youth, women, Indigenous Peoples and local communities play an active role in shaping restoration priorities.

- More than 30 women- and youth-owned businesses were launched in targeted enterprises across 5 countries, thereby creating sustainable green jobs.

CHALLENGES

- Public financing for the initiative is insufficient and unevenly distributed, which hinders the effective implementation of policy commitments.
- Efforts to align the initiative's commitments with the nine countries' NDCs and the [Global Biodiversity Framework's restoration target for 2030](#) remain uneven, with gaps existing between high-level targets and country-level implementation capacity and financing.



2

FINANCING AND INVESTMENT MOBILIZATION



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Forest landscape restoration requires significant upfront investment but also offers significant economic opportunities.

To support our aims, we are developing mechanisms and incentives to unlock financial flows from international funds, governments and the private sector through means of blended finance.

We are also growing viable business models for nature-based restoration solutions, and strengthening value chains for products from landscapes that are under restoration.

From 2021 to 2025, our progress in market development and securing restoration finance was significant. We connected many projects with funders to drive both impact and shared success. The initiative is shifting its focus from project-based interventions to long-term programmes that use market-driven models to secure sustainable financing for restoration.

PROGRESS MADE

- The [UN's Food and Agriculture Organization \(FAO\)](#) has unlocked US\$22 million designated for Kenya, Madagascar, Tanzania and the DRC, and WWF is now a service provider in Tanzania, supporting the government.
- Catalytic funding has been leveraged, including seed funds from the German government for the [FLR Implementation Hub](#) in Tanzania, Uganda and Madagascar.
- Strategic partnerships were established, including those with Tanzania's [Forest and Beekeeping Division of Natural Resources](#), Terraformation and the AfDB.
- In collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, climate finance readiness has been strengthened in participating countries through training in managing climate finance, accessing major funding opportunities, and designing gender-responsive programmes and projects.
- The initiative received significant technical and financial contributions from WWF-Switzerland, WWF-UK, and WWF-Germany.



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KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- More than US\$13 million has been secured for landscape restoration in Africa.
- Nine WWF national offices were mobilized to scale restoration efforts for the FLR Initiative.
- Eight of the participating countries actively engaged investors. Four of these countries (Cameroon, Kenya, Madagascar and Tanzania) launched bankable projects that channel finance directly into restoration interventions.
- A total of 26 value chains have been developed, ranging from honey to sustainable timber, thereby anchoring restoration efforts within local economies.
- An inclusive business model, with targeted implementation training, has empowered more than 120,000 people to participate in and benefit from restoration.

CHALLENGES

- Despite significant funding progress, insufficient long-term financing and a dearth of investment-ready restoration pipelines are limiting the expansion of restoration efforts across the nine countries.
- There is inadequate sustained donor support, private sector engagement and innovative financing mechanisms.

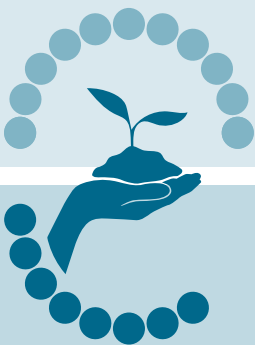


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TARGETS SET FOR 2025

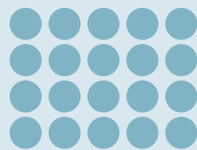
11

WWF national offices/
donors involved in
restoration



20

restoration-related
businesses
established



US\$20 million
generated from
value chains



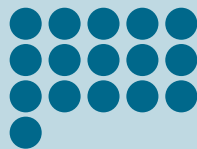
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WWF national offices/
donors involved in
restoration



16

business models
and 26 value chains
established



>US\$13 million
generated by
restoration



PROGRESS MADE BY 2025

3

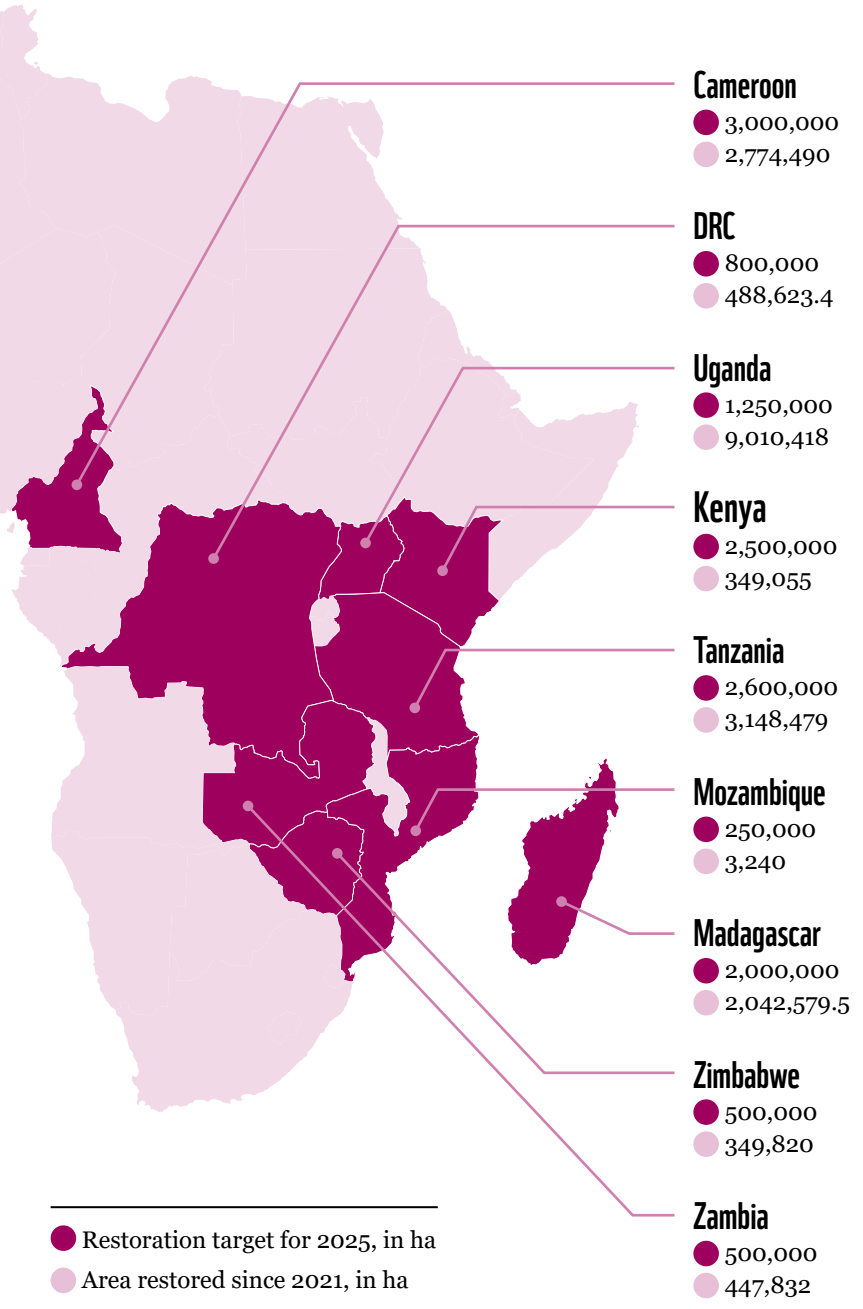
DELIVERING ON THE AFR100 COMMITMENTS



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Forest landscape restoration isn't just about individual conservation projects. It's also about putting in place the necessary conditions – from government policies to financial mechanisms, business models and community capacity – that will enable restoration.

- Significant progress has been achieved in terms of on-the-ground implementation of the AFR100 commitments, with restoration efforts transforming land- and seascapes, and benefitting households.
- Collaboration on conservation efforts across the key focus areas of forests, freshwater, food, finance, wildlife, climate, energy and oceans is strengthening holistic, integrated restoration approaches.
- The initiative has supported ROAM processes and national forest landscape restoration strategies in participating countries.
- Landscape assessments and restoration portfolios were developed in participating countries.
- **Restor**, a digital platform for nature conservation and restoration projects, has been operationalized to enable impact tracking and reporting across participating countries, thereby enhancing data transparency. This digital platform assesses ecological, social and financial factors to restore degraded land and foster nature-positive, climate-smart solutions.
- Studies using geographical information systems (GIS) have been conducted to capture ecosystem degradation and identify restoration opportunities.



	AFR100 commitments, in ha		WWF achievements by 2025 (area under restoration, in ha)		
Country	Government, by 2030	WWF, by 2027			
Cameroon	12,000,000	3,000,000	2,774,490	Active restoration: 6.7% Improved management: 93.3%	
DRC	8,000,000	800,000	488,623.4	Active restoration: 13.9% Improved management: 86.1%	
Kenya	5,100,000	2,500,000	349,055	Active restoration: 53.5% Improved management: 46.5%	
Madagascar	4,000,000	2,000,000	2,042,579.5	Active restoration: 0.6% Improved management: 99.4%	
Mozambique	1,000,000	250,000	3,240	Active restoration: 100% Improved management: 0%	
Tanzania	5,200,000	2,600,000	3,148,479	Active restoration: 12.5% Improved management: 87.5%	
Uganda	2,500,000	1,250,000	9,010,418	Active restoration: 0.2% Improved management: 99.8%	
Zambia	2,000,000	500,000	447,832	Active restoration: 39.8% Improved management: 60.2%	
Zimbabwe	2,000,000	500,000	349,820	Active restoration: 0.6% Improved management: 99.4%	
	41,800,000	13,400,000	18,614,537.51	Active restoration: 5.6% Improved management: 94.4%	

KEY SUCCESSES

- By 2025, more than 18 million hectares of degraded and deforested landscapes, watersheds, rangelands and coastal ecosystems had been brought under effective restoration. Approximately 68 million hectares showed potential for restoration.

CHALLENGES

- Scaling restoration efforts from the point of delivering landscape-level results to having a wider national impact requires additional resources, stronger coordination and sustained investment, along with the further strengthened participation of youth, women and local communities across all landscapes.
- Monitoring systems, geospatial tools and digital platforms such as Restor must be further developed to support consistent data use, long-term functionality and the inclusive tracking of benefits and participation.

SPOTLIGHT ON TANZANIA: WHAT HAS CHANGED?

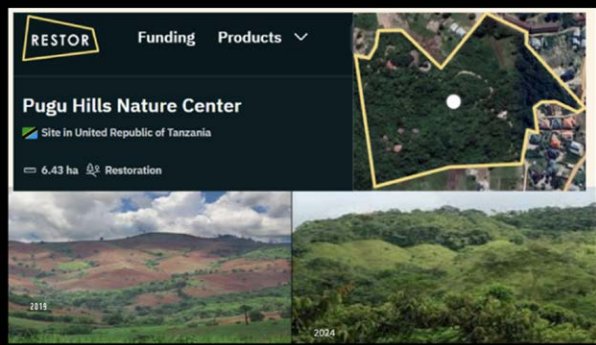
In Tanzania, the FLR Initiative has accelerated the on-the-ground implementation of restoration plans at scale, translating commitments into tangible results.

It has also positioned Tanzania as a regional test case for large-scale blended finance, while setting the stage for replication across the continent.

WWF-Tanzania has launched a comprehensive analysis of policies supporting the initiative's efforts. Building on this, action plans have been developed at the sub-national level to implement the national forest landscape restoration strategy. These action plans provide a concrete roadmap for local forest landscape restoration and help turn policies into practice.

Restor-generated impact analysis has been done in the [Southern Kenya–Northern Tanzania \(or 'SOKNOT'\) transboundary area](#), the [Water Towers landscape](#), the [Ruvuma transboundary landscape](#) and the [Rufiji-Mafia-Kilwa \(RUMAKI Plus\) seascape](#), covering approximately 3.13 million hectares. This analysis shows that forest health and density in these landscapes have increased since 2021, and that the carbon sequestration rate has grown accordingly.

PUGU KAZIMZUMBWI NATURE RESERVE



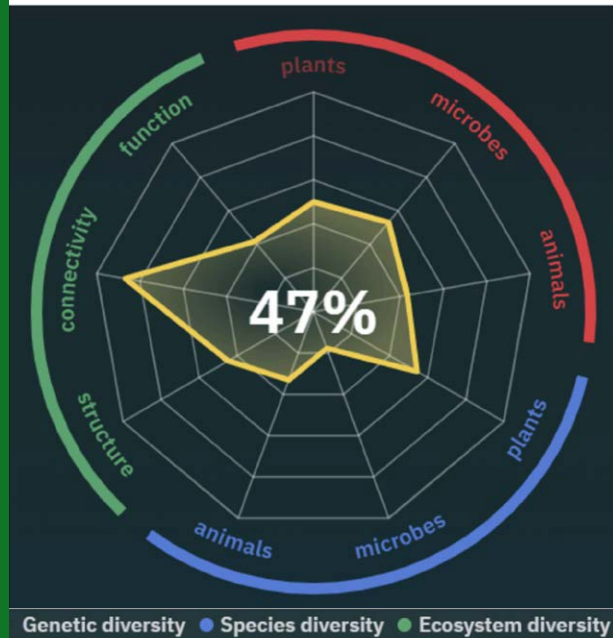
An example of a Restor-generated polygram for the Pugu Kazimzumbwi Nature Reserve in Tanzania. A total of 6.43 hectares of the forest landscape in this nature reserve has been restored, as evident in the picture taken in 2024 versus that taken in 2019.

WWF and its partners have also been using the [SEED Biocomplexity Index](#) (or the 'Seed Index') to track their efforts. This is the world's most comprehensive, integrated and globally standardised measure of biodiversity. It measures the state of nature across genetic, species and ecosystem levels to assess the complexity of life, relative to its natural state.

Tanzania

Pugu Kazimzumbwi
Nature Reserve

SEED Biocomplexity Index



The Seed Index was used to study four landscapes in Tanzania where restoration is underway. The landscapes scored 47% on the index, indicating moderate ecological recovery between 2021 and 2025. The results show that vegetation and connectivity improved more than ecosystem functioning and wildlife recovery.

The adoption of tools such as Restor, GIS-based mapping and robust monitoring systems have strengthened transparency, data sharing and the adaptive management of restoration.



Tanzania is leading efforts to restore degraded landscapes severely impacted by unsustainable land uses.

ROADMAP FOR 2030: SCALING CONSERVATION IN PRIORITY LANDSCAPES

The FLR Initiative offers an example of how conservation impact can be scaled, through three interconnected approaches: **Scaling out**, **scaling up** and **scaling deep**.

Scaling out involves expanding successful conservation solutions to new locations and adapting them to novel contexts. **Scaling up** drives systemic change by influencing policies, governance and institutional frameworks to create the conditions necessary for conservation success. **Scaling deep** ensures a lasting impact by shifting cultural norms, values and behaviours within communities. Together, these three strategies help conservation efforts achieve widespread, long-lasting and transformative restoration effects.

The FLR Initiative has grown from a bold ambition into a continental force for community-centred ecosystem restoration. We are scaling out the implementation of the AFR100 commitments in nine countries, as our abovementioned successes show.

Policy remains critical in scaling up restoration in that it allows for institutionalizing conservation priorities and ensuring consistent action across the continent. By aligning regional and national actions with global conservation goals, our efforts bridge the gap between aspirational commitments and tangible outcomes. This creates the foundation for large-scale, lasting environmental impact.

The success of the FLR Initiative thus far highlights Africa as a leader in nature-based conservation solutions and demonstrates how restoration strengthens ecological integrity, enhances climate resilience, and expands green economic opportunities.

The right approach to landscape restoration depends on the specific ecosystem affected, its level of degradation, the biodiversity that remains, and the long-term processes needed to keep that ecosystem functioning.



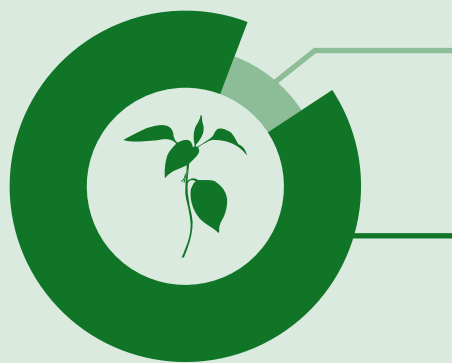
MOVING FROM STRATEGY TO IMPACT

Despite progress in restoration, stakeholder engagement, and initial financing, a significant funding gap remains if we are to realise the full potential of the initiative. To deliver the 2030 roadmap targets, US\$20 million is needed, of which over 90 per cent is currently unsecured.

With strong political support, established partnerships and proven impact, the initiative is well positioned to restore 13.5 million hectares by 2030, and to contribute to restoration, as well as regional and global goals and commitments.

CURRENT FUNDING GAP

US\$20 million
needed by 2030 to deliver
restoration targets



10%
of funding
is secured

90%
of funding
is still unsecured



Enabling policy and institutional frameworks

- Strengthen multi-stakeholder platforms
- Influence national policies to include forest landscape restoration
- Integrate forest landscape restoration in district and local plans
- Institutionalize adaptive cycles via national monitoring, evaluation and learning groups

Budget: US\$5,831,500



Promoting finance and market mechanisms

- Scale up green/blended finance (including payment for ecosystem services and bonds)
- Expand community value chains and green enterprises
- De-risk private sector investments

Budget: US\$7,335,000



Delivering on the AFR100 commitments

- Scale restoration to meet the AFR100 targets
- Apply integrated landscape approaches
- Deepen community ownership and tenure security
- Build national monitoring, evaluation and learning systems with dashboards and peer review learning labs

Budget: US\$6,463,150



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WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Overall, the 2021–2025 period represents a transformative chapter for the FLR Initiative. It showcases powerful evidence that when restoration is integrated into local development plans, supported by strong governance, financed sustainably, and driven by communities, landscapes recover and people thrive.

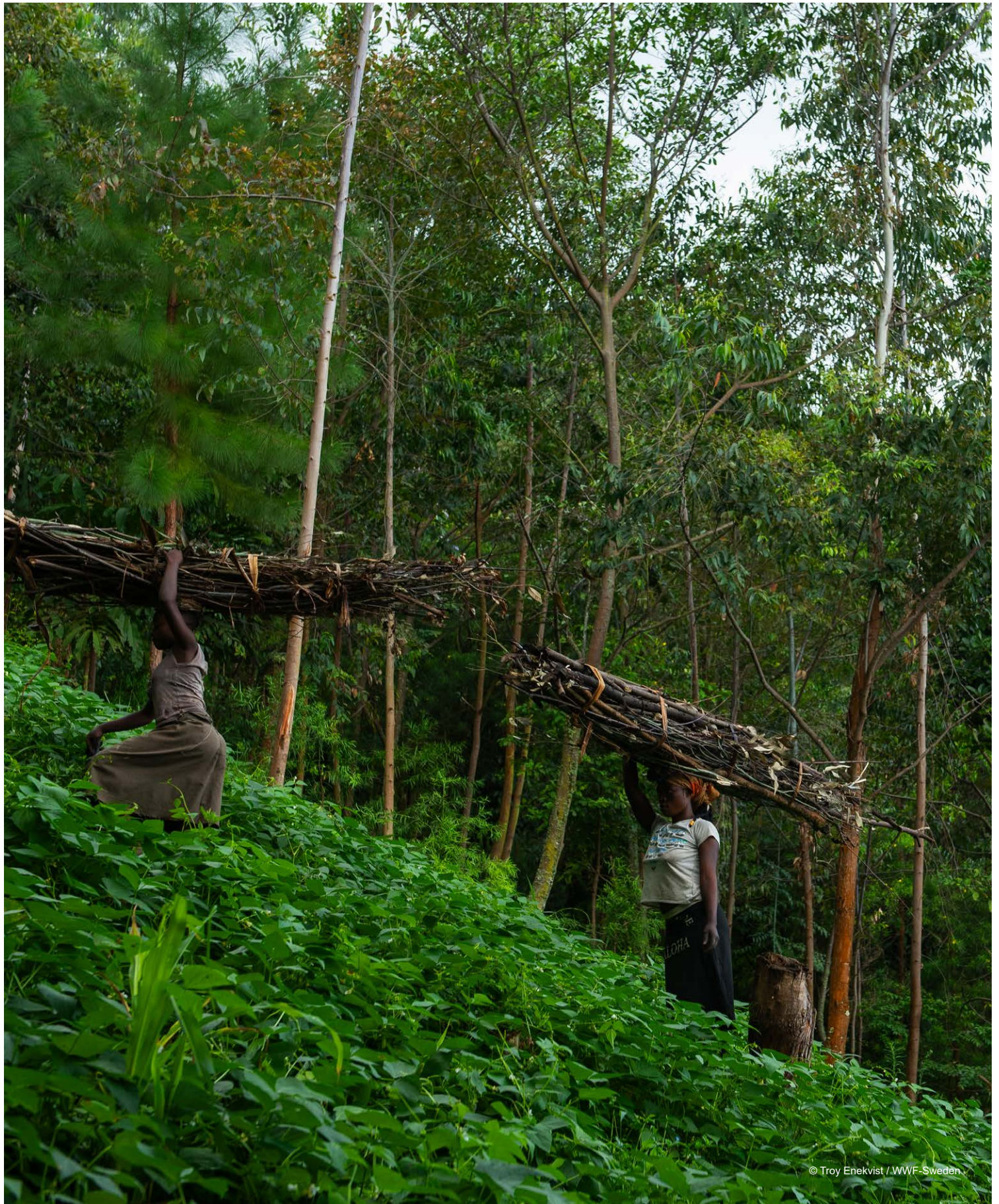
The initiative's next phase builds on this foundation, calling for bold partnerships to scale restoration across Africa and ensure resilient landscapes and livelihoods for generations to come. We know what works: solutions rooted in landscapes and their peoples.

Restoration efforts are not just about revitalizing landscapes but also about building resilient ecosystems for the future. This is Africa's moment to lead the world in ecosystem restoration and with your support, we can multiply our impact. Join us in scaling restoration on the continent.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
PLEASE SCAN



<https://bit.ly/4tUHNf9>



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Working to sustain the natural world for the benefit of people and wildlife.

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