



African Union Great Green Wall Initiative Strategy and Ten-Year Implementation Framework: Enhancing Ecosystems Restoration and Livelihoods Resilience (2024-2034)

Summary Brief



FOREWORD



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Chairperson
African Union Commission

Africa faces coinciding and compounding challenges of climate change, migration, climate related risk and conflict, land degradation, desertification, water scarcity and biodiversity loss, existential challenges to our Member States. These stressors and shocks cannot be addressed without proactive, collective continental efforts targeting the impacts and encumbrances of these challenges, which are already hampering our integration and development. In addition, we seek harmonised and coordinated approaches for multi-scale action and enhanced coordination.

The new Great Green Wall Initiative Strategy and Ten-Year Implementation Framework (2024-2034) is one of our continent's flagship initiatives, providing a tool to help restore our landscapes and build resilient livelihoods. Today, there is unquestionable

indigenous and scientific evidence to highlight how landscape restoration can directly combat desertification and land degradation by contributing to ecosystem resilience, making the continent and its people more adaptable to changes in the environment. This can in turn contribute to the achievement of our development aspirations outlined in Agenda 2063, as well as assist us in accomplishing our broader sustainable development goals through improved biological diversity, climate mitigation and adaptation, improved water quantity and quality and disaster risk reduction. In addition, land restoration can provide livelihoods and job opportunities to our continent's women, men and youth and enable greater peace and security while coalescing resilience building benefits derived through the nature-based solutions for sustained support of well-functioning ecosystem services.

Responding effectively to these multiple environmental and social challenges is going to require deep collaboration and synergies. As a continent, we need to work together to build effective and meaningful partnerships with the broader international community.

Much work has already been achieved, and we congratulate Member States and Regional Economic Communities who have made substantial headway on land restoration targets to date.

This revised Great Green Wall Strategy has evolved substantially since its inception in 2007 as a response to advancing deserts using a band of tree plantations. Today, this initiative covers a mosaic of different

land uses with the common objectives of restoration to support ecosystem function and services, while strengthening people's resilience. In 2023, over 25 additional Member States from North, West, East and Southern Africa, joined the initial Member States from the Sahara and Sahel, including the eleven Member States of the Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall, achieving the true Pan African status as it was intended.

This new Strategy and its Implementation Framework is a key instrument in enhancing our regional collaboration in combating land degradation, desertification, droughts, and sand and dust storms that result in water scarcity, biodiversity loss and climate change with devastating effects and impacts on the lives, livelihoods and peaceful existence in our communities. It provides a framework for joint action and clearly expresses our needs and priorities as a continent. If effectively implemented, it will unlock Africa's potential in building climate resilient communities and economies, which are an integral component of our continental vision for 'an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens, representing a dynamic force in the international arena'. We all now have a responsibility to ensure that this becomes a living document, one that informs and enriches our collective actions at local, national regional and global levels.

I call on all Member States, Regional Economic Communities, and our development partners, collaborators, sympathisers and believers in the ideals of the Great Green Wall Initiative to join the Africa Union Commission in making use of this document to accelerate the achievement of restoration and resilience goals and aspirations.

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The Strategy seeks to enhance understanding of emerging underlying drivers of change on our continent and sets out to address them in an integrated, inclusive and holistic way in order to build more transformative and sustainable community resilience to the considerable stresses and uncertainties that we face as a continent today.



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African Union Commission

Building on the pillars of our existing harmonised Regional Great Green Wall strategies and the efforts and aspirations of African Member States, this new *African Union Great Green Wall Initiative Strategy and Ten-Year Implementation Framework (2024-2034)* provides a mechanism for a harmonised and coordinated approach for multi-scale, collective action for restoring landscapes and building resilient livelihoods.

The Strategy sets out a new continental vision and pathway, and includes common principles, priorities and action areas for achieving this at a pan-African scale, focusing on efforts to deepen our collaboration and inclusion among diverse stakeholders within and across scales.

Our vision is to transform African landscapes into bastions of productivity and resilience, securing a sustainable future for all its inhabitants. Importantly, this new Great Green Wall Initiative Strategy

and Implementation Framework builds on more than a decade of work focused on implementing the Initiative, and it seeks to enhance understanding of emerging underlying drivers of change on our continent and sets out to address them in an integrated, inclusive and holistic way approach in order to build more transformative and sustainable community resilience to the considerable stresses and uncertainties that we face as a continent today.

This new Great Green Wall Strategy and Framework is founded under a wide range of core principles. It aspires to be African-led and African-owned, promoting regional integration, subsidiarity, local ownership and inclusive people-centred approaches. It also importantly seeks to enhance gender transformation, integrate traditional and indigenous knowledge and practices, and promote just and equitable transitions for scaling up land restoration. Intersectionality, transparency, accountability, efficiency and adaptive management are also key principles within the Great Green Wall Strategy and Implementation Framework, and it seeks to align plans and priorities to a whole-economy and systems approach, promoting effective collaboration and coordination across disciplines, sectors and institutions.

The importance of co-design and co-delivery of transformative restoration, resilience, and development practices and processes emerging from inclusion and leadership of women and youth is also central to this document. The Strategy weaves together the threads of community engagement, scientific research, practical application, and policy development into a coherent tapestry that supports resilient food systems, sustainable land management, value chains and entrepreneurship.

For the Great Green Wall Strategy and Implementation Framework to be effectively implemented, it is essential that broad-based partnerships are established for knowledge management, knowledge exchange, capacity development and advocacy and resource mobilisation. In addition, existing initiatives, policies and strategies that have complementary objectives can be capitalised upon to accelerate the Great Green Wall goals and objectives. This Great Green Wall Strategy and Implementation Framework is informed and guided by the existing national climate, biodiversity, disaster risk efforts and aspirations of African Member States and regions. It also aligns closely with other continental frameworks and projects, such as, the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme Malabo Declaration agenda, programmes and projects, the 2021-2030 Decennial Priority Investment Plan of the Pan African Agency for the Great Green Wall Initiative, our Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032), the Green Recovery Action Plan, Disaster Risks Reduction Strategy for Africa, the Biodiversity Strategy, Sustainable Forest Management and Framework for Africa, Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa, and the African Strategy on Combating Illegal Exploitation and Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora in Africa.

The Strategy further complements other flagship programmes of the African Union and the African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development, including the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative, Global Evergreen Alliance, the One Billion Trees for Africa, the Programme for Infrastructure Development for Africa and the African

Continental Free Trade Area, among others.

We believe that this Strategy and Implementation Framework provides an important point of convergence for the three global Rio Conventions, namely, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. It also intends to ensure its contribution as a cornerstone programme of Land Degradation Neutrality and the Decade for Ecosystem Restoration, helping to meet key targets of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

From the outset, this Great Green Wall Strategy and Implementation Framework sets out to clarify the roles and responsibilities of engagement to achieve its envisaged goals and objectives. It therefore underscores the importance of agreed coordination arrangements and mechanisms among regions, institutions, agencies, partners and stakeholders.

Significant support for the implementation of this Pan-African Great Green Wall Strategy and Implementation Framework is needed from Regional Economic Communities, Member States, Regional and Great Green Wall agencies, development Partners, non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations and citizens at large, and local and international partners. This is paramount in achieving the Strategy's objectives, as well as to scale the priority areas that are required to achieve sustainable land management, landscape restoration and livelihoods resilience through nature-based solutions over the next ten years.



BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Photo: ©Kelvin Trautman (ICRAF)

The Great Green Wall Initiative is a flagship initiative of the African Union, initiated in 2007 to respond to the increasing threat of advancing desertification. Initially envisaged as a long band of narrow tree plantations in the Sahel and Sahara, today the Great Green Wall Initiative has evolved into a mosaic of different land uses, aiming to restore agricultural, pastoral, dryland and forest lands in support of healthy ecosystem functions and services, while strengthening people's livelihoods, well-being, and resilience against the myriad of stresses and shocks to which the region is prone.

From its original form, the Great Green Wall Initiative has evolved both in its

approach, ambition, and geographical reach. The transition from the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative to the Great Green Wall Initiative, signifies an evolution towards a more comprehensive, continent-wide approach to environmental sustainability. Along with the original 11 member countries associated with the Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall the Great Green Wall Initiative now encompasses an additional 25 countries from North, East, Southern and West Africa. An additional three countries including South Sudan, Kenya and Uganda have expressed interest at this stage.



- The **11 countries in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, members of the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall**. Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Sudan. Many of these countries were the pioneers of the Initiative.
- Other **Pioneer-countries** which are not part of the Pan African Agency: Algeria, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Libya, Egypt, The Gambia, Tunisia, Somalia and Côte d'Ivoire. South Sudan, Kenya and Uganda have expressed an interest in joining.
- The **Southern African countries under the auspices of Southern African Development Community** and with support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. This includes: Angola, Botswana, The Union of the Comoros, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Figure 1. The current membership of the Great Green Wall Initiative.

Realising the extraordinary potential of a continent-wide response to land degradation, desertification and climate change, and cognisant of the need for its urgent revision, the African Union Commission developed a revised framework to serve as the overarching coordination agenda for the Great Green Wall Initiative. This Strategy encourages an integrated and holistic approach to land rehabilitation and climate-resilient development among its Member States, Regional Economic Communities, Agencies and partners.

Furthermore, this coherent approach guides integrated development planning at various scales to support the combined priorities of sustainable land, water and biological diversity management, climate adaptation and mitigation, and human well-being. The Great Green Wall Initiative's natural focus on landscapes and their inhabitants, including tens of millions of smallholder farmers, pastoralists, and the residents of rural market towns, makes it a radically new approach for achieving restoration at scale.

Aligning with existing policies, programmes, projects and commitments

In support of the African Union's efforts to reach and exceed its ambitious objectives over a ten-year timeframe, this Strategy outlines an overarching continental vision and clearly sets out a number of key objectives, priorities, and approaches to achieve this. Backed by a long-term implementation plan, this Strategy also attempts to expedite the operationalisation of commitments and activities and align implementation partners with the priorities and goals of the Strategy.

In realisation of a shared vision for a prosperous, secure, inclusive and innovative future for Africa, and based on the aspirations of the African Union's 2063 Agenda, this Strategy builds on the continent's commitment to simultaneously ensure an effective multilateral approach to addressing land degradation, loss of biological diversity, water scarcity, as well as to ensuring people's livelihoods and jobs are protected and that broad-based climate-resilient development is enhanced

through the achievement of Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals. This Strategy seeks strong alignment with Member State commitments to global agreements, such as to the Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; to the targets of Land Degradation Neutrality under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification; and towards the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as the goals set under the Decade for Ecosystem Restoration.

In addition, the Strategy seeks to complement other green and sustainable development policies and projects of the continent (Figure 2). This Strategy does not intend to replace existing institutions or set up new structures. It has been developed to enhance existing initiatives and to strengthen coherence and coordination across plans, policies and projects.



Figure 2. The Great Green Wall is a contributor to indicative African plans, actions, frameworks and strategies.¹

1. Regreening Africa. 2023. [Regreening Africa Final Report](#). CIFOR-ICRAF.

Responding to megatrends: the current state of play

This Strategy responds to the multiple emerging and accelerating crises and megatrends facing the continent today. These include, among others, economic recovery in a post COVID-19 world, increasing migration and conflicts, a steady rise in global autocracies, emerging issues associated with artificial intelligence, global financial instability, and rising deficits in food, water, work, safety and security.

Socio-ecological systems globally are facing numerous threats and high rates of degradation, while Africa's climate impacts, especially in arid and semi-arid environments, are significant, wide-ranging and potentially catastrophic. The climate change impacts are expected to interact with and exacerbate existing drivers of migration like poverty, conflict, lack of opportunity, and political marginalisation.

Between 2004 and 2022, there was an increase in undernourishment in most

African regions.² Further, there was a three-fold increase in the number of disaster displacements to 7.4 million, the highest figure ever reported for the region (Figure 3).³ As the impacts of climate change increase, the potential for forced displacement and migration increases, with more people adding pressure on host communities and a higher likelihood that tensions rise (Figure 4). Wars and conflicts are concentrated disproportionately in dryland regions, while countries experiencing armed conflicts are disproportionately affected by climate variability and extremes.

Gender inequality continues to be a concern, though progress has been made in some areas, such as women's political representation. Inequalities in access to education, healthcare, and basic services persist, with marginalised groups, including ethnic minorities and refugees, facing disproportionate challenges.

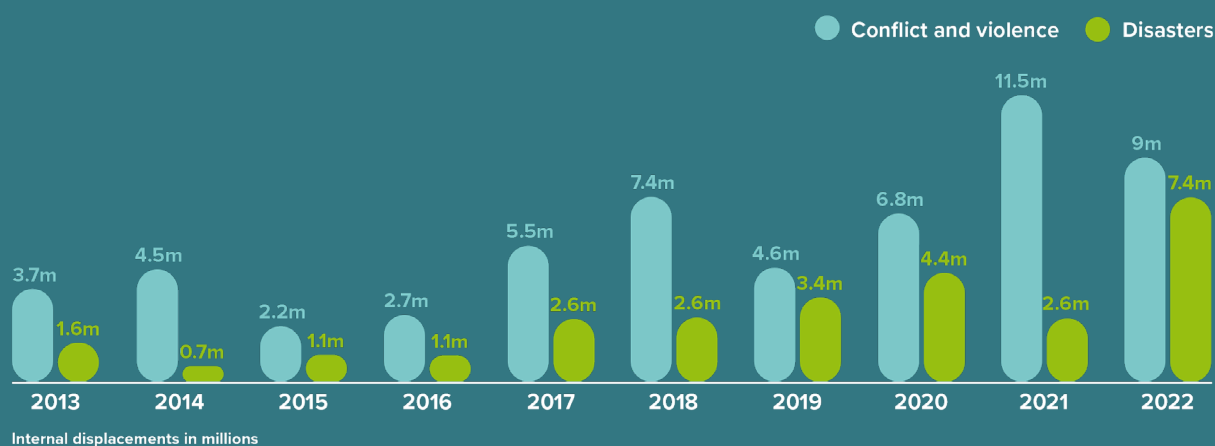


Figure 3. Internal displacements by conflict, violence and disasters in Sub-Saharan Africa, 2013-2022.³

2. FAO. 2023. [Suite of Food Security Indicators](#). In: FAOSTAT. Rome. [Cited 12 July 2023].

3. GRID, 2023. [Internal displacement and food security](#). Global Report on Internal Displacement.

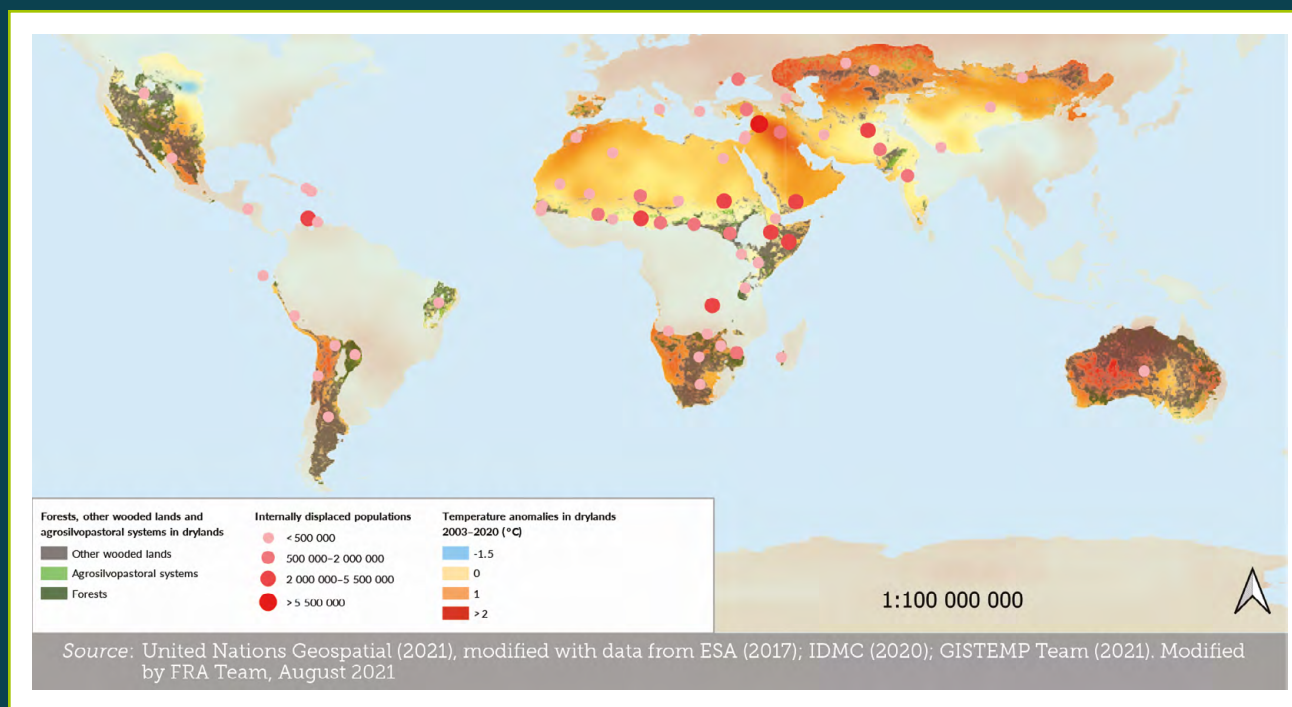


Figure 4. The interconnection between temperature anomalies and internal displacement of populations in dryland forests and other wooded lands and agrosilvopastoral areas.⁴

Restoring the health of landscapes and the environment can mitigate different facets of these polycrises, simultaneously building resilience, biological diversity and water security, while providing numerous stabilising benefits to the communities whose lives and livelihoods depend on the underpinning ecosystem functions. Also, such landscapes will be much better able to resist the encroachment of deserts and the trend towards rising populations coupled with unsustainable land management and the climate crisis. A more thorough treatment of the socio-ecological data and trends can be found in the full Strategy document.

African drylands cover two-thirds of the continent and are home to two-fifths of the population.⁵ The drylands experience variable rainfall, regular droughts and flooding leading to food shortages, water scarcity and some of the world's highest levels of poverty, which in turn lead to humanitarian crises and migration. As such, these vulnerable landscapes are targeted by the Great Green Wall Initiative to build prosperity and resilience. Box 1 describes some of the key characteristics of Africa's drylands.

4. FAO, CGIAR and CARE. 2021. [Deploying a humanitarian–development–peace nexus approach: Exploring, strengthening and reviving dryland ecosystems](#) – Forestry discussion paper. Rome.

5. FAO. 2019. [Trees, forests and land use in drylands: The first global assessment](#). FAO Forestry. Paper No. 184. Rome.

BOX 1. Key characteristics of African drylands

Drylands are defined as lands where the ratio of annual precipitation and the mean annual potential evapotranspiration, also known as the aridity index, is no more than 0.65. African drylands cover two-thirds of the continent, including three-fifths of its agricultural land, and are home to two-fifths of the population. In addition, if 'presumed' drylands (areas that contain dryland features but with an aridity index greater than or equal to 0.65) are taken into account, the area covered is far greater (Figure 5).⁵

Dryland areas are hyper-arid, arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid, and are regions where primary production is limited by water availability. These areas are also characterised by low and erratic rainfall, droughts, heatwaves, and occasional floods. The distinct biophysical features of drylands make them highly susceptible to the negative impacts of climate change. Upsurging temperatures, changes in precipitation and rainfall patterns, land use, nutrient availability, atmospheric carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions, are key driving factors of unprecedented dryland expansion. In addition, drylands are associated with substantial land degradation and are extremely vulnerable to severe environmental shocks. In 2021, the Food and Agriculture Organization

of the United Nations reported that in Africa, up to 65% of productive land is degraded, while 45% of the continent's land area is experiencing spreading desertification.⁶ Soil erosion has long been recognised as a major process of land degradation resulting in losses of productivity and biological diversity, decreased resilience of landscapes and increased vulnerability to climate change. Despite this, the results from a global assessment demonstrate that African drylands are not wastelands, but productive landscapes with considerable economic potential and environmental value.⁵

Figure 6 shows the drylands of Africa with land use delineations. As expected, these hyper-arid and arid areas are dominated by other land and grassland areas, and semi-arid and dry sub-humid categories are dominated by grassland, followed by forestland followed by cropland.⁷

Model simulations clearly show that continued global warming will make the earth's drylands drier over time. Climate models predict high evapotranspiration and lower soil moisture levels in arid and semi-arid regions of Africa, suggesting some tropical grasslands could become drier and unsuitable for farming.⁸

6. **Berrahmouni, N. and Mansourian, S. 2021.** [Review of forest and landscape restoration in Africa](#). Accra. FAO and AUDA-NEPAD.

7. **Sacande M., Guarnieri L., Maniatis D., Marchi G., Martucci A., Mollicone D., Morales C., Oubida R.W. and Paus Diaz A.S. 2022.** [Africa Open Data for Environment, Agriculture and Land \(DEAL\) and Africa's Great Green Wall](#). Rome, FAO.

8. **Schmidhuber, J., and F.N. Tubiello, 2007:** Global food security under climate change. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.*, 104, 19703-19708, doi:10.1073/pnas.0701976104.

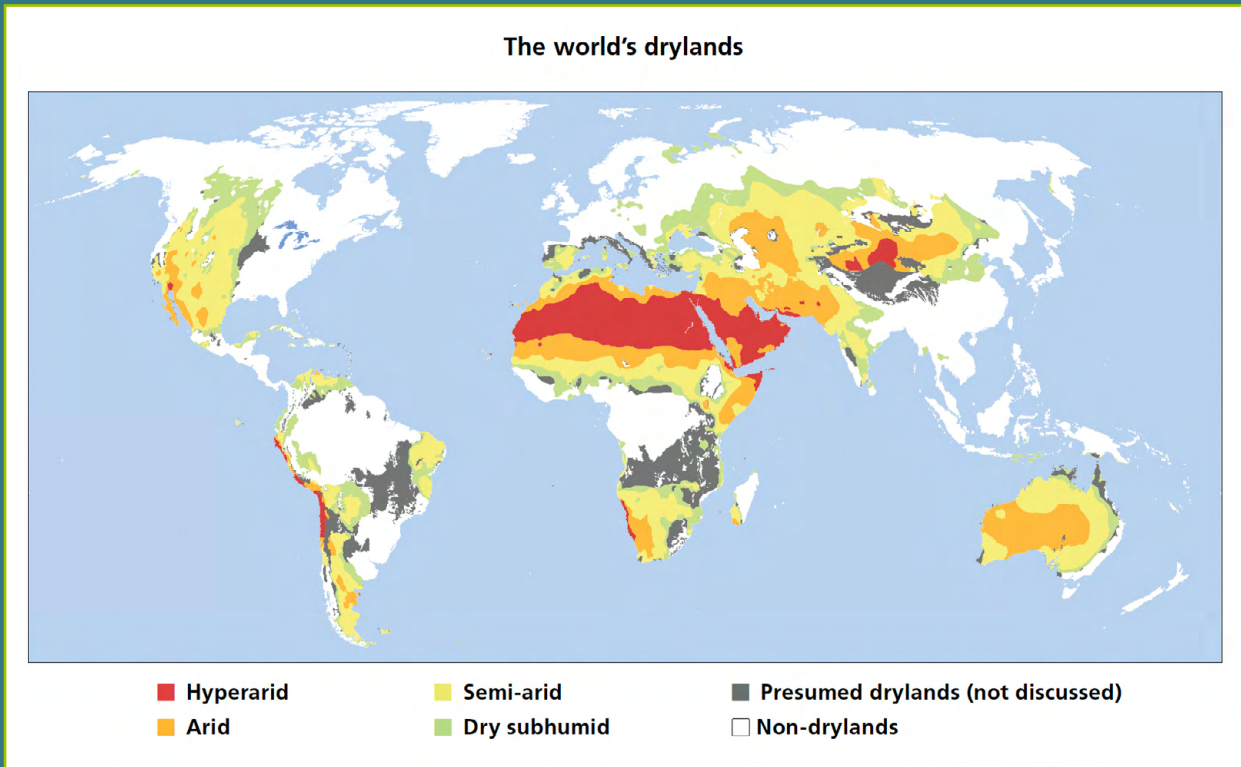


Figure 5. Global drylands featuring the different types of African Drylands.⁵

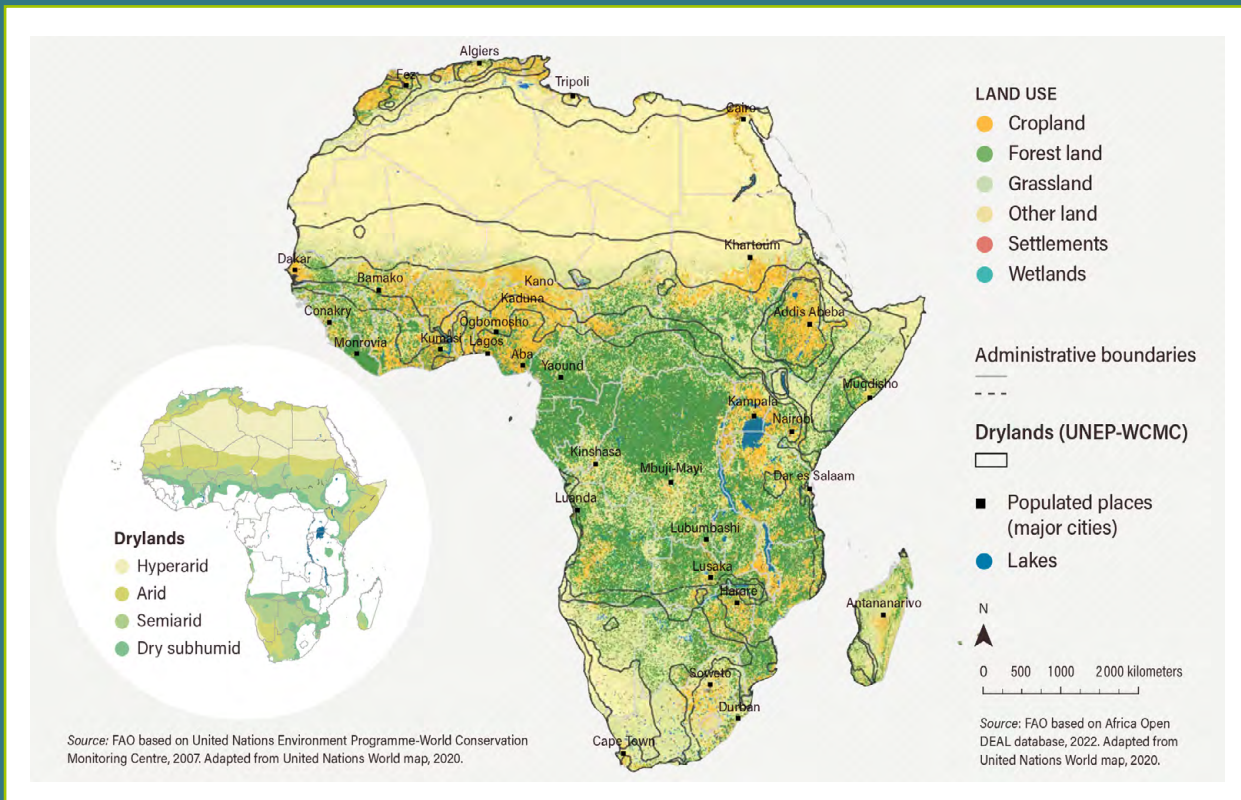


Figure 6. Map of land use delineations in Africa with dryland boundaries.⁷

Strengthening partnerships, coordination and governance mechanisms

Today, the Great Green Wall Initiative stands at a crossroads. Its recent history provides an opportunity to build on the learnings from past failures and successes, and revisit and co-design the Strategy's objectives and goals aligned with the latest science, developments, ambitions, and reflections from the continent. It offers an opportune moment to take stock and strengthen the key strategic framing, coordination and governance mechanisms of a revised continental Strategy, further seeking to clarify the role and mandate of key players, such as the African Union Commission, the Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall, Regional Economic Communities and Member States. In addition, it provides the chance to strengthen and build strategic partnerships and coordination mechanisms needed to enhance the Strategy's implementation and to ensure the delivery of its intended goals. This includes defining the critical roles of a diverse set of non-state actors and vulnerable groupings. It also allows for the enhancement of engagement modalities to increase participation and broad-based inclusion. To accomplish the Strategy's vision and objectives, a truly inclusive multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral and multi-scale engagement process is needed for planning, decision making, and implementation. In addition, evidence-based monitoring, reflection, and accountability for flexible and adaptive management is key to defining the Strategy's adoption and long-term success.



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The Strategy weaves together the threads of community engagement, scientific research, practical application, and policy development into a coherent tapestry that supports resilient food systems, sustainable land management, value chains and entrepreneurship.



BUILDING UPON EXISTING FRAMEWORKS AND ADDRESSING THE CONCERNS IN PREVIOUS ASSESSMENTS

Photo: ©Kelyin Traufman (ICRAF)

This revised framework is built off the original 2012 Harmonised Regional Strategy for Implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative. In addition, it incorporates and expands on the priority areas identified in associated strategies, including the Southern African Development Community Great Green Wall Initiative Strategy (2022) and the Great Green Wall Accelerator and Decennial Priority Investment Plan. This Strategy

also draws upon the lessons learned from two decades of implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Great Green Wall Accelerator Strategy (2021) and the Great Green Wall Initiative Priority Investment Plan (2021-2030) for the Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall. The pillars across these strategies have contributed to the development of the continental strategy as shown in Table 1.

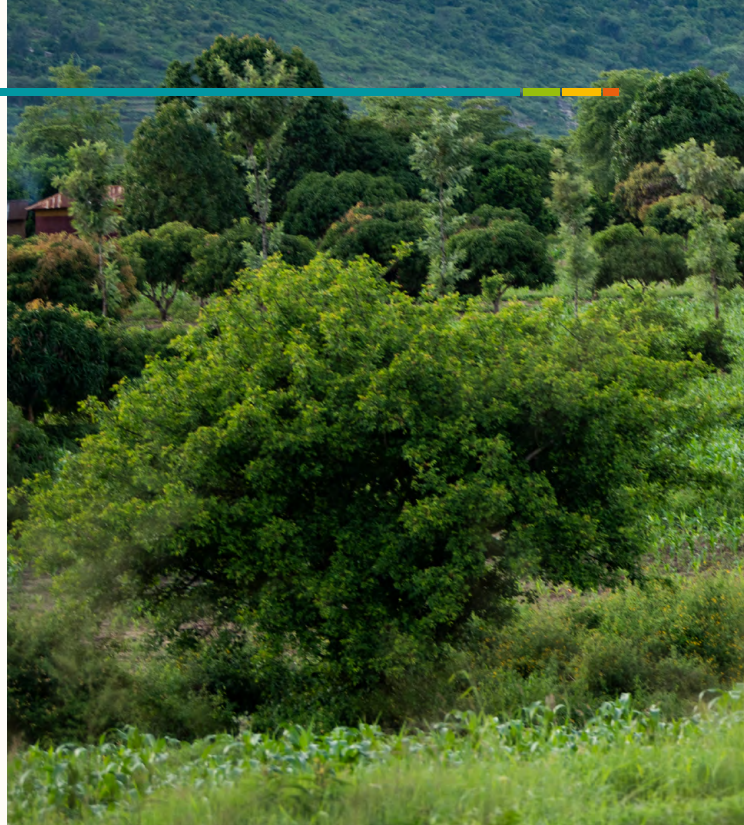
Table 1. Pillars across recent strategies contributing to the continental Strategy.

<p>BROAD CATEGORIES</p>	<p>Great Green Wall Implementation Status and Way Ahead to 2030 - Pillars (2021)</p> 	<p>Southern African Development Community Strategy for the Implementation of the Great Green Wall Initiative - Pillars (2022)</p> 	<p>Priority Investment Plan 2021-2030 Decennial Portfolio (2021)</p> 	<p>Great Green Wall Implementation Status and Way Ahead Cross-Cutting Pillars</p>
<p>ECONOMIC RESILIENCE AND GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORKS</p>	<p>Favourable economic and institutional framework for effective governance, sustainability, stability, and security</p>	<p>Transformative economic and business development Livelihoods versus wealth creation, green jobs, ecotourism, equitable and resilient communities, waste management and circular economy, private sector development</p>	<p>Resilient Economic Development and Security Promotion of productive green jobs, improving access to basic needs and services and social services</p>	<p>Governance</p>
<p>PRODUCTION SYSTEMS</p>	<p>Investment in small- and medium-sized farms and strengthening of value chains, local markets, organisation of exports</p>	<p>Strengthened agricultural productivity and resilient food systems Food security, value chains, irrigation, commercialisation, fisheries, climate-smart agriculture and livestock</p>	<p>Resilient Economic Development and Security Development and enhancement of promising local opportunities, food and nutrition security</p>	
<p>ECOSYSTEM HEALTH</p>	<p>Land restoration and sustainable management of ecosystems</p>	<p>Productive and Resilient Ecosystems (Land, Biodiversity and Climate Change) Land restoration, soils land management, agroforestry, forests, rangelands, wetlands, coastal (Blue Wall), land use planning, nature-based solutions, wildlife, natural resources management, water for all addressing drought and water scarcity</p>	<p>Sustainable Management and Development of Land, Water Resources and Biodiversity Restoration and development of land and protection of biodiversity Mobilisation and integrated management of water resources and watershed development</p>	<p>Disaster Risk Reduction and Early Warning Systems</p>

<p>CLIMATE ADAPTATION</p>	<p>Climate-resilient infrastructures and access to renewable energy</p>	<p>Climate Resilient Green Infrastructure Access to Renewable Energy Renewable energy and energy efficiency for access and development</p>	<p>Climate Actions and Green Economy Adaptation and resilience to climate change and green growth, green growth and development of renewable energies, vulnerability management to climate risks</p>	<p>Green Technology and Technology Transfer</p>
<p>CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT</p>	<p>Capacity building</p>		<p>Strengthening of Scientific and Technical Capacities Mobility and scientific and technical networks, Knowledge and innovation management, Strengthening logical, scientific and technical capacities, Terroirs development and resilience support centres</p>	<p>Capacity building (knowledge, education, awareness raising, research and innovation)</p>
<p>INFORMATION, MARKETING AND ADVOCACY</p>			<p>Information, Marketing and Advocacy Monitoring, evaluation, and information; Knowledge, communications, marketing and advocacy</p>	
<p>GENDER AND YOUTH</p>				<p>Gender and Youth</p>
<p>RESOURCE MOBILISATION</p>				<p>Resource Mobilisation and Innovative Financing</p>

While the Great Green Wall remains one of the most inspiring initiatives by Africa for Africa, it has been unable to meet the restoration targets it initially set out to achieve. Since its inception in 2012, the Great Green Wall Initiative has undergone numerous independent evaluations,^{9,10,11} the findings and key recommendations of which, have been incorporated within the revisions of this Strategy. Based on the cumulative findings, this revised Strategy seeks to:

- **Address governance and institutional coordination challenges:** Clarifying the roles and responsibilities among Great Green Wall Initiative entities; promoting transparency, disclosure and accountability; strengthening monitoring related to the return on investments; promoting further collaboration across sectors and ministries; and providing clarity with regards to the Great Green Wall Initiative membership criteria.
- **Strengthen inclusive participation and partnership building:** Promote collaborative approaches with state and non-state actors; enhance long-term timeframes for engagement and planning; and promote community ownership and commitment.
- **Address technical challenges:** Provide appropriate technologies and capacity; address data gaps, data sharing and use of evidence and experience; enhance investment in capacity development, knowledge management, cross-learning and communications.
- **Build on monitoring, reporting and verification systems:** Strengthen monitoring, evaluation, learning and reporting; address capacity gaps for monitoring, reporting and verification; and provide comparable data and sharing.
- **Strengthen the enabling policy environment and political commitment to Great Green Wall Initiative:** Provide an overarching vision for the Great Green Wall Initiative; address concerns around evidence-based policy development; and recognise land and tree rights.
- **Address funding hurdles:** Consider a thorough investment timeline and a programme approach; promote African-based funding; seek additional finance – both in quality and quantum; and encourage the follow through from pledges to actual financing on the ground.



9. UNCCD. 2020. [The Great Green Wall implementation status and way ahead to 2030](#). Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall and Government of Ireland.

10. UNCCD. 2023. Independent Evaluation of the GGW Accelerator. UNCCD.

11. Transparency International. 2023. [Governance mapping and assessment of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative](#).

TOWARD A NEW PARADIGM: GREAT GREEN WALL INITIATIVE 2.0

Photo: ©Kelvin Trautman (ICRAF)

The Great Green Wall Initiative 2.0 offers a valuable opportunity to inform and strengthen decision-making, build resilience and incorporate the most successful approaches and lessons learned, to:

- Implement scaled, community led landscape restoration;
- Adopt multi-stakeholder, multi-sector and multi-scale, participatory approaches and leadership;
- Integrate science and expert knowledge from researchers, citizen scientists and indigenous/ traditional knowledge;
- Include monitoring, reflection, learning and adaptive management frameworks and indicators;
- Prioritise and explore new financial avenues and incentives through land restoration-based value chains and other innovative finance mechanisms;
- Strengthen policy alignment and cohesion; and
- Take into account uncertainty and adopt foresight planning.

Indicative norms are given to guide the development of this second iteration of the Great Green Wall Initiative and facilitate the changes needed to massively scale up land restoration efforts and build resilience for the people these landscapes support, they include:

- **Engaging all stakeholders** - Engagement and inclusion are critical to achieving the desired outcomes and aspirations of diverse stakeholders, institutions, disciplines and sectors across scales.
- **Ensuring effective coordination** – Structured and effective coordination is required across the different Great Green Wall associated bodies, including clear roles and responsibilities associated with policymaking, coordination and management, technical support and implementation, communications and knowledge sharing, and monitoring and reporting.
- **Taking a systems approach** – This requires the consideration of complex and interconnected economic, environmental, social, cultural, institutional and political dimensions.

- **Employing structured evidence- and experience-based approaches** - Policy making, planning, design, decision-making, implementation and adaptive management need to be based on robust evidence and experience.
- **Developing capacities, shifting behaviours, sharing knowledge and scaling practices that work** – Advances in scalable, proof-positive practices; behavioural science integration into capacity development; new technologies and apps for greater knowledge sharing; and structured scaling techniques can be adopted to benefit the Great Green Wall Initiative going forward.
- **Attracting and deploying capital** - There are growing opportunities to capture and channel resources from diverse funding streams and models that incentivise and support landscape restoration such as green finance investment platforms and marketplaces, private sector partners, and Village Savings and Loan Associations.
- **Scanning the horizon with foresight analysis** - Foresight analysis offers a framework and a set of interactive tools to plan for high levels of uncertainty and complexity. It can be applied to enable resiliency, agility and adaptability in planning for an ever-changing world.



Photo: ©Kelvin Trautman (ICRAF)

12. **Nature-based Solutions Initiative. 2023.** [What is the Nature-based Solutions Initiative and what are nature-based solutions?](#) University of Oxford.
13. **Project Drawdown. 2023.** [Conservation agriculture.](#)
14. **The World Bank. 2021.** [Climate-smart agriculture.](#)

BOX 2. Indicative approaches to support restoration and resilience building in the new paradigm

- **Nature-based approaches** - involve working with nature to address societal challenges providing benefits for both human well-being and biological diversity.¹²
- **Conservation agriculture** - uses cover crops, crop rotation, and minimal tilling to produce annual crops. It protects soil, avoids emissions, and sequesters carbon.¹³
- **Climate-smart agriculture** - is an integrated approach to managing landscapes— cropland, livestock, forests and fisheries- that addresses the interlinked challenges of food security and climate change.¹⁴
- **Agroforestry** - is the collective name for land-use systems and technologies where woody perennials (trees, shrubs, palms, bamboos, etc.) are deliberately used on the same land-management units as agricultural crops and/or animals, in some form of spatial arrangement or temporal sequence.¹⁵
- **Farmer-managed natural regeneration** - is the selective management of naturally regenerating trees and shrubs from stumps, seeds or roots. This practice also involves adapting local knowledge on managing tree species that regenerate and is generally practised in farming areas.
- **Participatory rangeland management**-works with customary institutions in dryland pastoral settings to strengthen communities' abilities to manage their rangelands. The process includes the creation of management committees that develop plans to manage resources that support resilience to climate change, such as the restoration of grazing areas.¹⁶
- **Holistic planned grazing** - is a planning process for integrating livestock production with crop, wildlife and forest production while working to ensure continued land regeneration, animal health and welfare, and profitability.¹⁷

15. FAO, 2015. <https://www.fao.org/forestry/agroforestry/80338/en/>

16. Bullock R., Miriti P., Lopez D.E. 2022. Participatory Rangeland Management: Understanding Women's Engagement and Implications for Social Change. Presented at the CGIAR GENDER Science Exchange, Nairobi, 12-14 October 2022. Nairobi: International Livestock Research Institute. Flintan F., Diop A. and Coulibaly M. 2022. Brief: Opportunities for Participatory Rangeland Management (PRM) in the Great Green Wall Initiative in Mali and Senegal. Nairobi, Kenya: ILRI.

17. Savory. 2015. What is holistic planned grazing? <https://savory.global/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/about-holistic-planned-grazing.pdf>

STRATEGIC FRAMING OF THE GREAT GREEN WALL INITIATIVE STRATEGY



This Strategy is a ten-year strategic planning document (2024-2034) that defines the main priorities, intervention areas and action areas required to scale up land restoration and resilience building activities associated with agricultural, grazing, and forest landscapes across the

African continent. This Strategy is designed as a living and evolving document to keep pace with the latest science, technological advancements and other global, continental, sub-regional and national developments. As such, the Strategy will be revised every five years.

Aspirations and objectives of the Strategy



VISION

By 2034, Africa’s dry regions are transformed into socially, economically, and environmentally resilient and stable regions.



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

Enhance the resilience of communities, ecosystems, and economies in the African drylands by improving the living conditions of populations, improving the state and health of ecosystems, advocating and mobilising resources, strengthening institutional collaboration and promoting policy coherence.



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

<p>Promote locally led land planning, land restoration and resilience building initiatives and nature-based entrepreneurial and livelihood activities that improve the well-being and incomes of communities, as well as empower them, particularly women and youth.</p>	<p>Catalyse inclusion, alignment, cooperation and ownership of land restoration and resilience-building in related strategies, policies, programmes and plans.</p>	<p>Promote policy coherence, alignment and a common narrative in strategies, policies, programmes and plans.</p>
<p>Invest in, and scale up, nature-based practices and inclusive landscape approaches to sustainable land, water and biodiversity restoration and management to support resilient value chains.</p>	<p>Enhance Africa’s capacity to mobilise resources at multiple scales.</p>	<p>Develop, invest in, and support, economic and environmental infrastructure facilitating the move to a green and circular economy.</p>
<p>Enhance the linkage and effective collaboration among community, practice, science, policy and private sector stakeholders fostering knowledge sharing and learning from experience and building upon a harmonised knowledge management system.</p>		<p>Encourage systems-oriented, cross-sectoral and coordinated decision-making and adaptive management environments that facilitate the integration of activities across all stakeholders, sectors and scales.</p>



AXIS 1

Enhancing leadership, governance and political commitment



AXIS 2

Co-design and deliver pathways toward transformative restoration, resilience and development



AXIS 3

Enhancing the means of implementation for resilient landscape restoration



AXIS 4

Leveraging existing initiatives



Principles

The Strategy articulates and builds upon clear principles including:

- Africa-led and Africa-owned;
- Promotion of African integration;
- Promotion of cultural values of African people;
- Solidarity;
- Subsidiarity;
- Local ownership and leadership, inclusive and people centred approaches;
- Gender transformative approaches, equity and benefit sharing;
- Respect and integrate traditional and indigenous knowledge, practices and preferences;
- Develop and enhance diverse partnerships;
- Address justice and equity and ensure just transitions for scaling up land restoration;
- Intersectionality;
- Transparency, accountability, efficiency and adaptive management;
- Align plans and priorities to a whole of economy and systems approach;
- Promote effective collaboration and coordination across disciplines, sectors and institutions;
- Employ structured evidence- and experience-based approaches that link science, practice and policy;
- Develop capacities, shifting behaviours, sharing knowledge and scaling practices that work;
- Promote secure access and use rights to land, trees and other resources;
- Promote labour intensive investments;
- Promote shared value, environmental and social governance;
- Attract and deploy capital.



Stakeholders and beneficiaries

The success of this Strategy is highly contingent on the active commitment and involvement of the beneficiaries and stakeholders in its development and implementation. The main beneficiaries of the Great Green Wall Initiative are smallholder farming, fishing and pastoralist households, as well as other participants in rural economies and landscapes. However, many local, regional, national and international institutions will also benefit from the restored landscapes of the Great Green Wall and are key stakeholders to ensure its success. These other beneficiaries

and stakeholders represent international bodies and government decision makers, technical agents and non-governmental and civil society organisations, science and academic institutions, community-based and farming, pastoral and forest-dweller organisations, women and youth groups, the media, rural businesses, other private sector bodies, and various financing and investment entities. Defining the respective roles and responsibilities among diverse stakeholders and beneficiaries is important for designing structured coordination and collaboration between all parties.



Strategy development methodology

The Strategy was developed based on the premise of creating an evidence-and experience-based document built on consultative sessions with individuals, institutions, and representatives from different stakeholder and thematic groups.

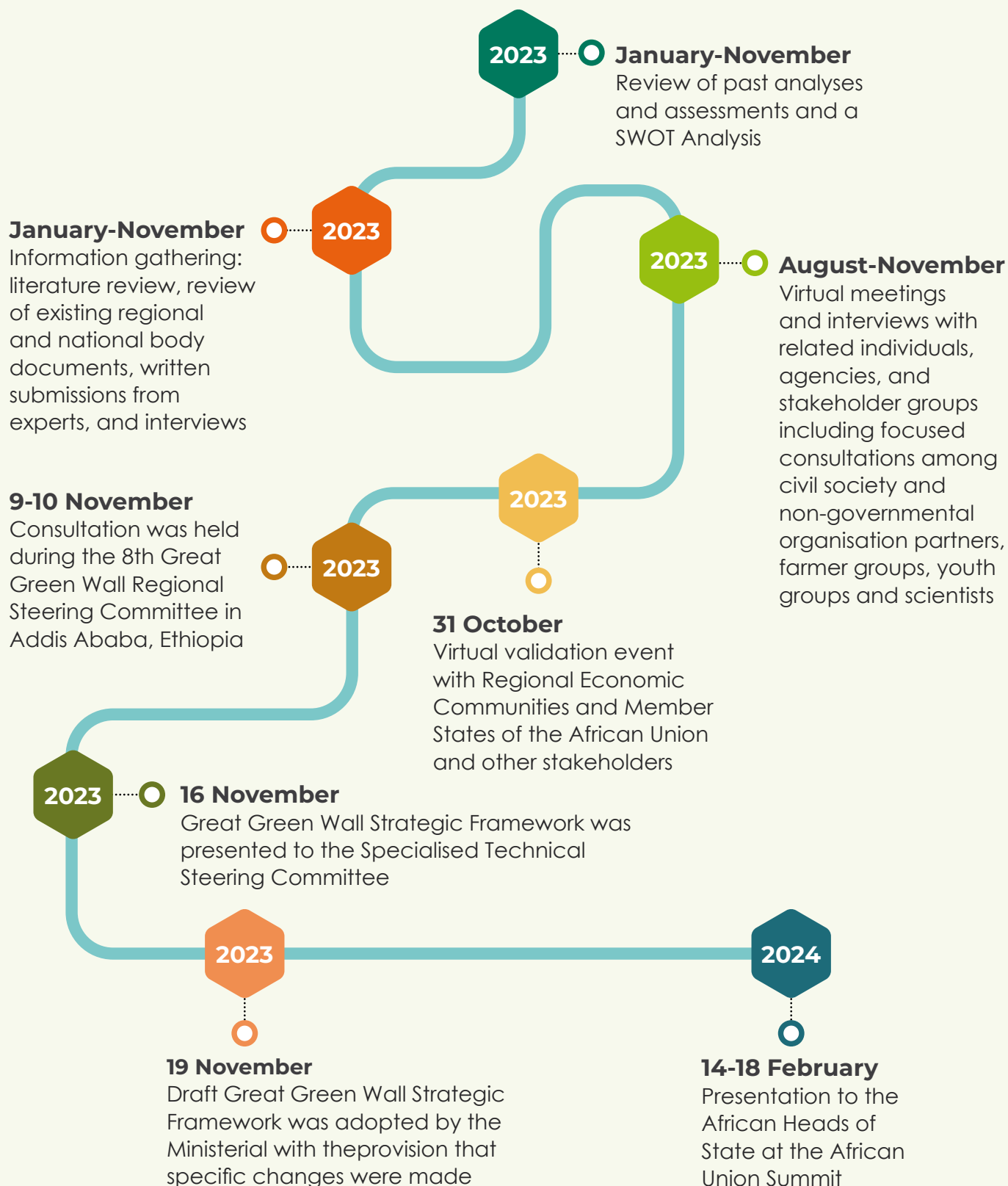


Figure 7. Strategy development methodology, validation process and timeframes.

Strategic interventions axes

There are four strategic intervention axes of the Strategy, designed to support the achievement of the Great Green Wall vision and objectives. Within the Strategy, specific suggested priority actions are articulated for each of the intervention areas identified under Strategic Intervention Axes 1-4.



STRATEGIC INTERVENTION AXIS 1. Enhancing leadership, governance and political commitment

This axis seeks to improve the leadership, coordination, cooperation, governance and political commitment necessary to effectively support and enable landscape restoration and resilience efforts across all scales.



Indicative priority actions

Raise and secure the political commitment to achieve the Great Green Wall Initiative objectives.

- Collaborate to develop and adopt policy documents that analyse the cost/benefit-ratios of various hard and soft intervention landscape restoration measures.
- Ensure that, across scales, leadership understands and highlights the primacy of landscape restoration and resilience through policy and investments.
- Raise the political profile of the Great Green Wall to the highest level by making it a multisectoral, multiagency and multi-scale initiative.
- Boost Member State prospects of the objectives of the Great Green Wall by aligning their national policies and commitments and supporting multi-stakeholder and multi-scale coalitions.
- Organise a series of exposure, reflection and dialogue events at the regional and national levels, throughout the entire implementation period.

Strengthen the leadership, governance, efficiency and transparency of the Great Green Wall Initiative and its agencies.

- Review the capacities for systems thinking, risk management and dealing with uncertainty in planning for complex integrated challenges.
- Create clear criteria to underpin the efforts that are considered to contribute to the Great Green Wall.
- Clearly agree and articulate the relationships and coordination mechanisms among organisations influencing the delivery of the Great Green Wall objectives.
- Create an advisory council of different stakeholder groups to take part in and support inclusive decision-making.
- Articulate robust indicators and means of measuring cross-sectoral integration in planning, evidence review and decision-making.
- Develop and adopt clear, common reporting and communication protocols.

Position, align and integrate Great Green Wall efforts within inter-related policies, mandates and commitments across nested scales.

- At the global and continental levels, map the ecosystem and livelihood resilience leverage points of the Great Green Wall to multilateral environmental agreements and the Sustainable Development Goals; Agenda 2063; the African Common Platform on Food System; and other related policies and strategies.
- At national levels, map the ecosystem restoration and livelihood resilience leverage points associated with national-level commitments.
- At the national, subnational and local levels, communicate the interrelationships among commitments and targets, and support integrated actions.

Deepen and broaden collaboration among diverse partnerships for resilience within and across different scales.

- Where they exist, continue to support strong and inclusive national level Great Green Wall coalitions.
- The Great Green Wall entities and relevant line ministries should: cooperate to create functional partnerships; coordinate their work to design and facilitate public services that help pursue the Great Green Wall objectives; enhance and incentivise the capacities of local actors with an emphasis on women and youth; and encourage the growth of locally rooted and locally led entrepreneurial agribusinesses.
- Identify and support champions at different scales to intentionally work across levels to solidify and leverage opportunities and synergies.
- Advocacy support to promote national land restoration and resilience campaigns and the mobilisation of local level groups to accelerate scaling.
- Celebrate and highlight best practices by creating attribution and acknowledgement processes.

Analyse barriers and incentives for creating a more favourable economic and institutional framework for effective governance, resilience, stability, and security.

- Carry out a rigorous review of the barriers and underlying causes of impasse around governance, coordination and leadership across the policy cascade.
- Elaborate and track mutually reinforcing mechanisms and establish measurable targets for transition toward linked goals of effective governance, resilience, political stability and human security.
- Use monitoring, reporting and verification tracking tools for enhanced accountability and reporting of finance and related actions.
- Develop a framework for effective international cooperation and support including South–South and North–South collaboration.



Photo: ©Kelvin Trautman (IGRAF)



A system change in landscape and livelihood resilience requires a transition to resilient, nature-based solutions, policy and governance reforms, behavioural changes, community-led engagement, connectivity, adaptive management and entrepreneurial and economic transformations tied to the health of ecosystem functions and services.



STRATEGIC INTERVENTION AXIS 2.
Co-design and deliver pathways toward transformative restoration, resilience and development

This axis articulates the strategies and actions that will directly contribute to landscape and livelihoods resilience, including increased land and soil health, biological diversity, effective water cycles, income from nature-positive farming, pastoral and forest endeavours and related entrepreneurial activities, and food security and nutrition at subnational and local levels.



Indicative priority actions

Bundle administrative, scientific, implementation and engagement capacities to tailor and scale landscape restoration and the management of ecosystems.

- Promote integrated natural resource management, enhanced ecosystem functions and the rising sustainable delivery of ecosystems services to build resilience, enhance food security and raise rural incomes.
- Bundle agroecological, nature-based practices based on harmonised knowledge management systems.
- Ensure the empowerment and leadership of land users and communities and secure mechanisms for inclusive land, tree, water and other resources governance.
- Develop core competencies in engagement and facilitation skills at the local level.
- Build upon existing or create mechanisms for nested participatory landscape, watershed and land use resilience planning across scales.

Promote inclusive leadership and resilient land-based economic enterprises and entrepreneurial activities for men, women and youth.

- Promote governance structures that recognise and support women as leaders.
- Promote a more equitable balance in workloads and in the sharing of economic and social benefits between women and men.
- Strongly encourage the participation and leadership of women and youth in rural development, ecosystem restoration activities and entrepreneurial activities.
- Promote green jobs in rural areas and optimise the employment potential for young people and women.
- Build on the entrepreneurial drive of young rural people to enhance their engagement and leadership in agricultural, pastoral and natural product-based businesses and value chains.

Invest in integrated value chains and employment that promote land health, effective water cycles and biological diversity.

- Promote and fortify capacities and competencies for integrated landscape and farming systems management.
- Adopt, roll out and strengthen mobile advisory and counselling services that are demand driven.
- Support farmer-to-farmer and farmer led innovation.
- Undertake market analysis and market development processes that encourage the growth of locally rooted entrepreneurial nature-positive agribusinesses and value chains.
- Promote nature-based (tree, crop, plant) value chains and enhance the markets for non-timber forest products.
- Promote livestock value chains, including the development of high value addition products that contribute to enhanced landscape management.
- Create the capacity of local land users to engage with and benefit from strengthened value chains.

Invest in climate-resilient infrastructure and access to renewable energy.

- Promote and popularise the large-scale use of renewable energies.
- Encourage rural energy entrepreneurship.
- Build necessary infrastructure to ensure communication connectivity and incubations for small- and medium-sized enterprises.

Promote community-led land restoration and resilience by expanding socio-ecological and political approaches, tools, and contextualised options.

- Collaborate to ensure women, households and communities have clear ownership and usage rights to their natural resources.
- Promote local governance mechanisms for natural resources with developed financial management capacity.
- Develop and disseminate through a training-of-trainers programme on an iterative behaviour-change toolkit that takes into account the heterogeneity of contexts.
- Facilitate cross-learning between communities with a focus on agroecological and greening practices.
- Financial transactions should whenever possible be carried out through mobile payment systems, which facilitate transparent accounting.
- Support the co-development of local natural resource governance rules, bylaws and conventions.
- Catalyse and support local level restoration campaigns and movements.
- Roll out a programme of community future-casting, local governance reviews, and co-imagination of practices and investments.

Promote community-led land restoration and resilience building by expanding the nature-based, agroecological and greening approaches, tools, practices and options.

- Foster tree planting with carefully selected species and promote tree regeneration through simple, highly cost-effective practices.
- Promote simple and widely proven land and water cycle restoration interventions.
- Apply regenerative agriculture practices (e.g. agroecology, permaculture) to increase soil fertility and soil health.
- Encourage communities to save, exchange and trade seeds.
- Optimise the management of livestock grazing systems.
- Integrate nomadic pastoralists in landscape-scale natural resource management plans.
- Incentivise community coherence for landscape restoration.

Invest in coordinated scientific and experience-based support and the creation of a common monitoring framework.

- Agree on a common list of social, economic and ecosystem health indicators for process, impact and behaviour change.
- Make use of scientifically backed community-based monitoring mechanisms and create intentional links between transdisciplinary Africa researchers and citizen scientists.
- Encourage incentivised trans-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary scientific teams.
- Build in evidence and experience-based dialogues at the local level in accessible formats.
- Incorporate accessible evidence- and experience-based planning, decision-making and implementation, monitoring, learning, evaluation and adaptive management.
- Facilitate cross-learning between communities.



STRATEGIC INTERVENTION AXIS 3.

Enhancing the means of implementation for resilient landscape restoration

This intervention axis focuses on the key approaches, partnerships, capacity development, finance and knowledge exchange and tools that serve as supportive means of implementation for Axis 1 and 2.



Indicative priority actions

Enhance finance flows and resource mobilisation through new and innovative finance mechanisms.

- Ensure the full responsibility of African institutions to mobilise and leverage financial resources for the implementation of the Great Green Wall.
- The African Union Commission should develop a resources sensitisation strategy and advocate for climate finance funding.
- Synergise the sources of Great Green Wall investments.
- Synergise national and local capacities to mobilise domestic and international financial resources.
- Integrate subnational authorities in funding initiatives.
- Encourage private sector actors in natural resources-based activities.
- Encourage the application of Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance frameworks.

Develop creative and dynamic partnerships and effective coordination.

- Improve coordination among existing partners.
- Integrate community, practice, science and policy partnerships.
- Establish partnerships among market, public and civil sectors.
- Ensure partnerships and coordination among different government sectors.
- Partner with faith-based organisations.
- Partner with traditional leaders and guardians of indigenous knowledge.

Ensure inclusive leadership and participation, especially of women and youth.

- Increase women's and youth representation in land restoration and resilience building policies and bylaws notably on access to land and tree resources.
- Support innovations and social learning that catalyse changes in sociocultural norms and behaviours.
- Enhance the education, knowledge sharing and sensitisation of gender and youth transformative approaches.
- Conduct regular advocacy and awareness programmes on youth and gender equality, inclusivity and leadership.
- Ensure greening, regenerative and resilience building practices are gender and youth sensitive, as appropriate.
- Ensure community groups with diverse gender and age membership have the required technical and planning, management and monitoring skills.
- Create and support local community campaigns and movements.
- Promote youth and women in entrepreneurial activities and nature positive value chains.

Develop capacity and knowledge exchange based on skills building and behavioural change.

- Enhance institutional capacity for governance, coordination, transparency and policy development.
- Enhance formal education to develop capacities in critical and systems thinking, soft and technical skills, human-centred design, and economics, laying the foundation for understanding the dimensions of landscape restoration and livelihoods resilience and how to go about achieving it.
- Enhance local technical skills on landscape restoration practices.

Utilise effective engagement and planning tools such as foresight analyses, scaling approaches, stakeholder and participatory mapping and analysis, Geographic Information Systems and spatial data, restoration planning frameworks, participatory land use planning, decision support systems, on-line collaborative platforms, and monitoring and evaluation tools.

Develop effective communications, advocacy approaches and visibility.

- Assess the historical Great Green Wall visibility and communications efforts.
- Develop an advocacy plan and an internal communications and knowledge sharing approach.

BOX 3. Why invest in restoring landscapes?

There is a wealth of information on the costs of inaction to restore land health. The land and soil degradation costs in Africa are estimated at USD 65 billion and these are projected to increase into the trillions by 2050 if no action is taken.¹⁸ Globally, the economic benefits of sustainable land management have been estimated to be up to USD 75.6 trillion.¹⁹ Further, for every USD 1 investment be it public or private on net-zero and nature positive actions, including ecosystem conservation and restoration, could generate USD 7- USD 30 more in the broader economy.²⁰ It

has also been reported that restoring grasslands can return up to USD 35 per USD 1 invested.²¹ Thus, the investments in land restoration interventions have enormous return.

Currently, investments globally in nature-based solutions are USD 200 billion with an annual investment requirement expected to triple by 2030 to USD 542 billion.²² In Africa, the estimated investment need is USD 21 billion per year but other scenarios²³ show that finance needs in Africa may be higher.

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19. ELD Initiative. 2015. Report for policy and decision makers: Reaping economic and environmental benefits from sustainable land management. www.eld-initiative.org

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21. De Groot, R.S., Bilgaut, J.m., Van Der Ploeg, S., Aronson, J., Elmqvist, T. and Farley, J. 2013. Benefits of investing in ecosystem restoration. *Conservation Biology* 27(6), 1286-93.

22. UNEP. 2023. State of Finance for Nature: The Big Nature Turnaround – Repurposing \$7 trillion to combat nature loss. Nairobi.

23. Roe, S., Streck, C., Beach, R., Busch, J., Chapman, M., Daioglou, V. et al. 2021. Land-based measures to mitigate climate change: potential and feasibility by country. *Global Change Biology*, 27, 6025–6058. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gcb.15873>.

BOX 4. Green finance for landscape restoration

Mobilising public and private sector capital towards nature-positive initiatives offers the opportunity to accelerate innovative and scalable solutions toward addressing biodiversity and climate crises while promoting sustainable land management and generating financial and social returns on investment.²⁴ Some innovative examples of green finance include:

- **FinTech business model** reduces costs, enhances service quality and enhances resilience of the financial system to absorb a range of shocks.²⁵ In Africa, the FinTech ecosystem includes payments and remittances, lending and financing, insurance, InvesTec, personal finance, block chain and open banking.
- **Web 3.0**, the next generation of the internet, emphasises decentralisation, interoperability and user control of data. Emerging technologies are providing opportunities to develop and engage with open-source platforms where grassroots communities can align their values with local culture, and demonstrate nature positive outcomes, leveraging data and reporting tools at low cost, while attracting investment from outside sources.
- **Regen Network** is a block-chain based platform and ecosystem that is focused on environmental and ecological conservation, sustainability and regenerative agriculture, creating a marketplace for ecosystem services to track sustainable practices in agriculture and land management. It incentivises activities that contribute to regeneration and sustainability of natural systems by enabling farmers and land managers to identify, value and trade verified ecosystem services credits.
- **Integrated landscape finance** enables place-based investments that together sustain and restore the natural resources that livelihoods and economies depend on in the long term. These include landscape-specific funds, landscape funds that invest in multiple landscapes, place-based investor collaboratives and foundations, landscape-focused development finance institutions and landscape bonds.

24. Gómez S., Purata S., Rodríguez E. 2023. [Pathways to unblocking private financing for nature-based solutions](#). Project update. World Resources Institute.

25. Tamasiga P., Onyeaka H., Ouassou E.H. 2022. Unlocking the Green Economy in African Countries: An Integrated Framework of FinTech as an Enabler of the Transition to Sustainability. *Energies*, 15, 8658. <https://doi.org/10.3390/en15228658>.



STRATEGIC INTERVENTION AXIS 4. Leveraging existing initiatives

This axis focuses on existing and upcoming efforts and initiatives that can be capitalised upon to readily contribute to the Great Green Wall goals and objectives and with which the Great Green Wall should work closely for effective coordination and synergies. Within the Strategy, numerous initiatives, projects and approaches are elaborated upon under a range of diverse sectors and cross-cutting categories.



Indicative priority actions

Landscape restoration, watershed management and resilience building

For example: Restore Africa; Reversing Land Degradation by Scaling-up Evergreen Agriculture (Regreening Africa); Knowledge for Great Green Wall Action; Sahel Mosaic; African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative; African Resilient Landscape Initiative; the African Development Bank; Food Systems, Land Use, and Restoration Impact Programme; the Global Environment Facility programmes; the Green Climate Fund's Scaling-Up Resilience in Africa's Great Green Wall; Palladium's Regeneration; Economics of Land Degradation Initiative; One billion Trees; Futures Agribusiness; Tree Aid; and 1000 landscapes for 1 billion people.

Healthy soil and water

For example: Soil Initiative for Africa; Coalition for Action on Soil Health; WOCAT; and Global Soil Partnership.

Pastoral and silvopastoral systems

For example: African Union Policy Framework for Pastoralism in Africa; the Global Environment Facility's Sustainable

Investments for Large-Scale Rangeland Restoration; Savory Institute Holistic Management; the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists; World Bank Regional Sahel Pastoralism Support project; and the Resilience and Intensive Reforestation Project for the Safeguarding Territories and Ecosystems in Senegal.

Renewable energy

For example: Africa Renewable Energy Initiative; and Desert to Power Initiative.

Climate change and climate resilient agriculture

For example: African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032); African Climate Summit; Green Climate Fund Inclusive Green Financing Initiative; Green Climate Fund Africa Integrated Climate Risk Program; and CGIAR Agricultural Adaptation Atlas.

Biological diversity

For example: The expert working group on Biodiversity, Climate, One Health and Nature-Based Solutions.

Green cities

For example: Green Cities for the Restoration of the Great Green Wall Ecosystems project.

Scientific support

For example: The Alliance for Accelerating Excellence in Science in Africa; and Global Monitoring for Environment and Security and Africa; University of Agricultural Sciences, University of Sassari in Italy.

Climate conflict, fragility and risk management

For example: African Risk Capacity.

Scaling approaches and projects

For example: Scaling Scan; and Green Climate Fund Scaling-Up Resilience in Africa's Great Green Wall.



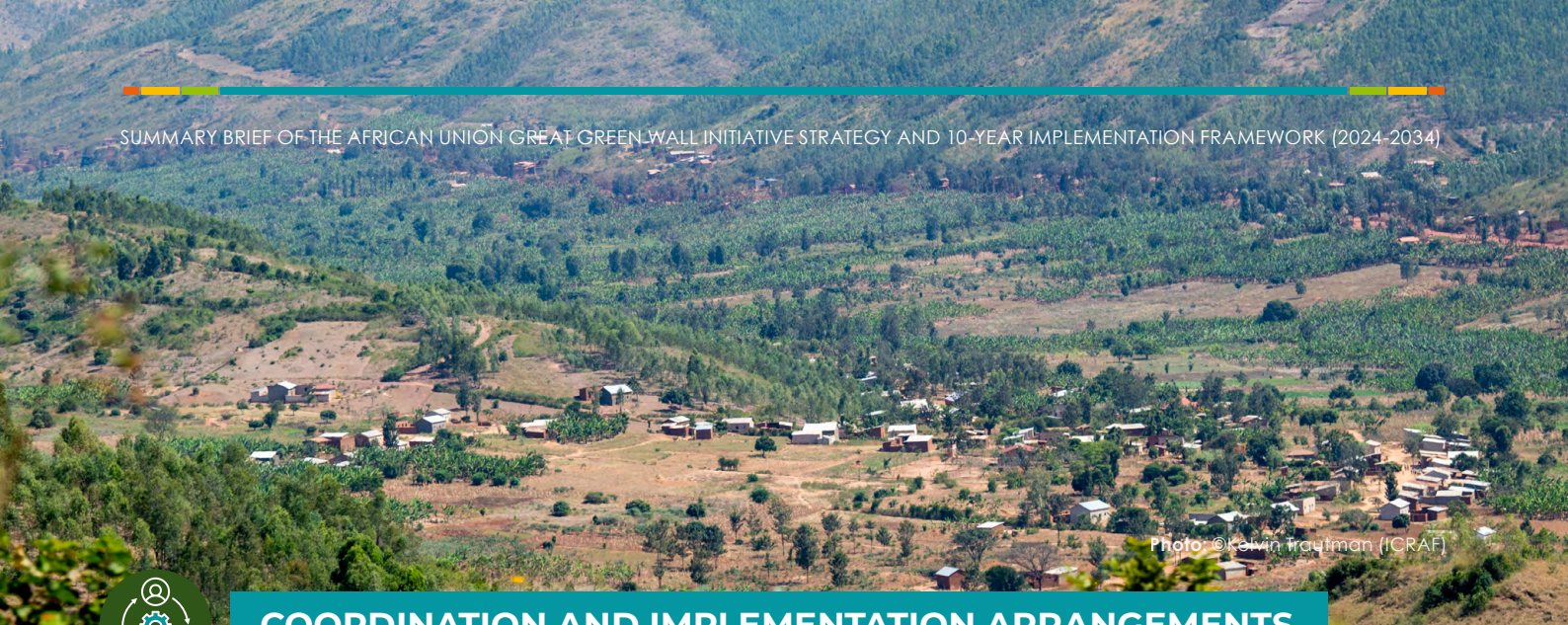
MONITORING, EVALUATION, LEARNING AND ADAPTATION

Over the lifespan of the Strategy, multiple agencies, institutions, and stakeholders across local, national, regional, continental and international levels will work together in close collaboration to ensure the achievement of the Great Green Wall Initiative vision, goals and objectives. Monitoring, evaluation, learning and adaptation provides the framework and processes by which these components are integrated and support the adaptive design, management, implementation and completion of actions within the Strategy. A robust monitoring, evaluation, learning and adaptation plan is one that is ongoing and will support the systems change and scaling of landscape restoration and livelihoods resilience required. This will be developed and budgeted for as part of the implementation Strategy. Human resources and capacities to carry out an effective monitoring, evaluation, learning and adaptation approach will need to be imbedded across continental, regional, national and subnational scales.



Priority actions

- Develop an inclusive monitoring, evaluation, learning and adaptation plan for the Strategy;
- Produce a readily accessible decision dashboard and multi-dimensional scorecard for assessing progress at multiple scales;
- Enhance the capacities of African Union Commission, stakeholders and partner organisations and agencies to carry out the monitoring, evaluation, learning and adaptation plan approaches; and
- Develop a biennial review process, including a biennial review report.



COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Agreed arrangements among institutions, agencies, partners and stakeholders are critical to ensure that implementation efforts associated with the Strategy are directed at and will meet the goals and objectives outlined. This will depend upon the clarity of roles and responsibilities, clear coordination mechanisms, and principles of engagement within and across scales, sectors, and stakeholders. Furthermore, additional and more effective flows of information, communications and financial resources will enable effective coordination, implementation, and adaptive management. To implement this Strategy, taking advantage of the strengths of different agencies, regions, and Member States invites a shift in how the Great Green Wall Initiative is governed and situated with respect to the historical contributing institutions and agencies.

As the Strategy is intended to harmonise the efforts of these different actors to contribute to the massive scaling up of landscape restoration and resilience building, this component of the Strategy reviews the existing roles of the different organisations, agencies, initiatives, and partners. Priority areas to underpin effective governance and coordination include the co-design of regional workshops to discuss the Great Green Wall governance arrangements and co-develop a coordination plan that clearly describes the roles and responsibilities of different actors including

non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations, youth and women's groups, and private sector entities.

To ensure membership requirements are clear, inclusive and straightforward from the onset, this Strategy proposes a set of criteria for joining the Great Green Wall Initiative, broken down by categories, such as for Member States, international, national and subnational organisations, networks, private sector actors and businesses. The processes and criterion for endorsement are also elaborated including, demonstrated commitment, alignment, and readiness to engage in the vision and objectives of the Great Green Wall Initiative. In addition, the Strategy looks at the criteria for new projects contributing to the Great Green Wall Initiative to ensure better alignment.

For the Great Green Wall Initiative to succeed, the African Union Commission, Regional Economic Communities and Member States need to demonstrate committed leadership to mobilise the necessary capacities and resources to upscale and consolidate achievements. In this regard, the Strategy proposes several investment and resource mobilisation mechanisms which can be deployed to raise the required funding for scaling and implementation, among external partners, existing member countries and those intending to join the Great Green Wall Initiative.

INITIATING THE GREAT GREEN WALL IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

To prepare for the robust implementation of the Great Green Wall Strategic Framework, critical activities are proposed for Year 1 (2024). These activities will be key to solidifying effective inclusivity and responsibilities within the steering committee, coordination among the Great Green Wall regional entities, sensitisation and communications at different scales and mobilisation of resources to support regional, country and community level plans. These activities include:

- Conducting a series of co-created workshops to agree upon well-functioning, efficient and transparent coordination mechanisms.
- Hosting regional governance and sensitisation dialogues.
- Conducting a gap analysis, SWOT analysis and stakeholder mapping exercises to support wider representation in Great Green Wall decision making.
- Developing accompanying plans including:
 - Communications/dissemination plan;
 - Monitoring, evaluation, learning and adaptation plan and score-card development;
 - Gender and youth framework;
 - Coordination plan; and
 - Resource mobilisation plan.

CONCLUSION

Investing in a Pan-African approach to landscape restoration, greening and resilience building, is a key tool to mitigate and adapt to the multiple and diverse stresses and shocks facing the continent. The Great Green Wall Initiative seeks to enhance the coordination and cohesiveness of actions across African stakeholders by proposing key intervention axes and priority pillars. These include the adoption of multi-stakeholder, multi-sector and multi-scale, participatory approaches and leadership; the integration of science and traditional knowledge to inform decision making; the uptake of monitoring, reflection, learning and adaptive management frameworks and indicators; long-term planning; and the need to prioritise and explore new financial avenues and incentives through land restoration-based value chains and other innovative finance mechanisms. In addition, the Strategy includes a detailed implementation plan to ensure coordinated support and alignment in resource mobilisation and investments around the continent's priority themes and sectors. This includes meaningful contributions from communities, farmers, pastoralists, women, young people, as well as other vulnerable groupings.

The Strategy, if sufficiently resourced and adequately implemented, would set the Great Green Wall Initiative on a transformative, long-term course towards building landscape resilience for Africa's communities, ecosystems and economies.

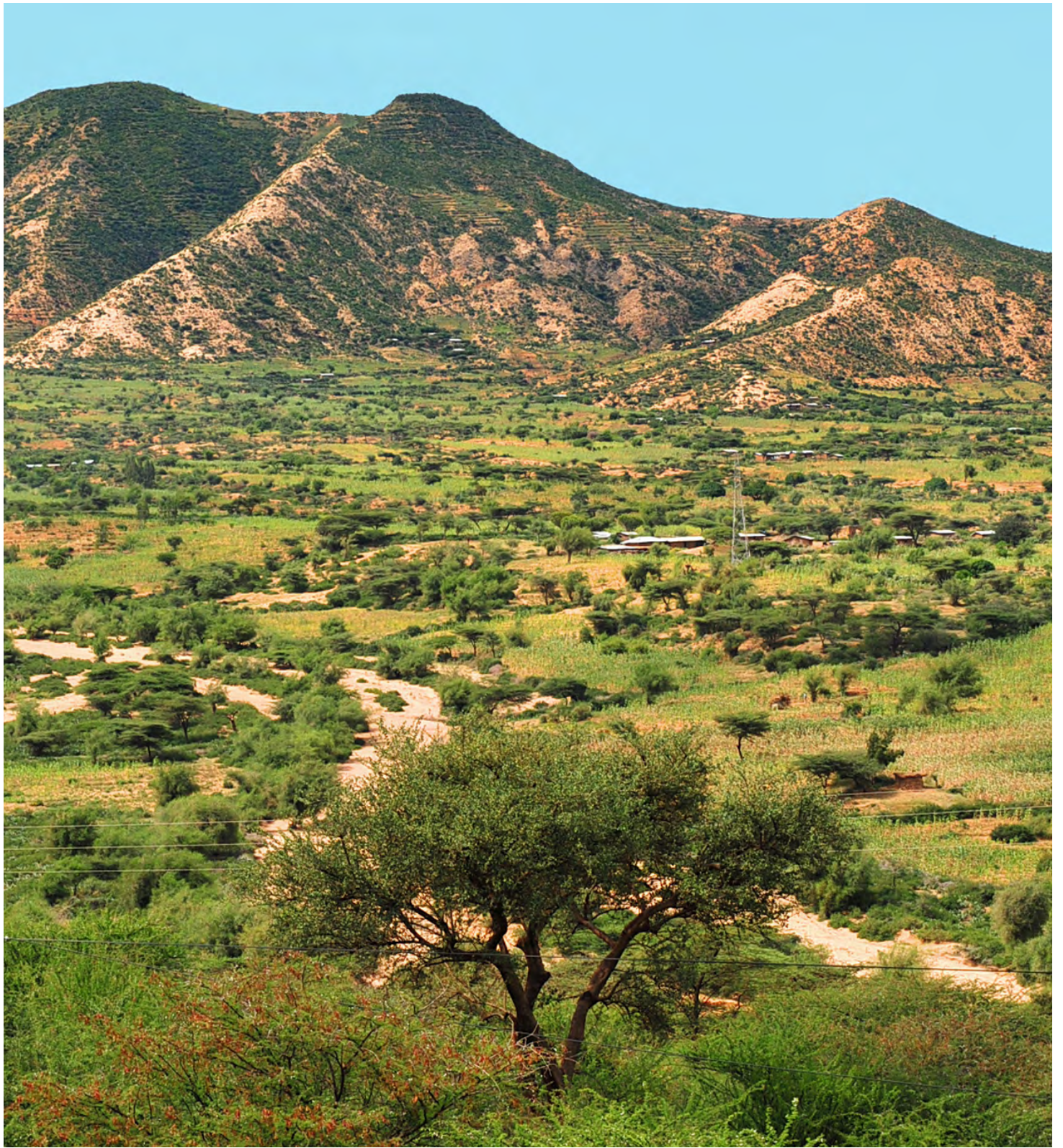
The African Union Commission will immediately set out to address some of the governance concerns of the Great Green Wall and work towards co-designing an optimal institutional and coordination arrangement.

The Strategy has been developed under the leadership of the African Union Commission, with the kind technical and financial support of the European Union and Catholic Relief Services.

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Partnerships and collaboration across market, public and civil sectors are critical for tackling complex socio-ecological challenges and scaling-up land restoration and resilience.

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