



AFRICA'S CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN (2022-2032)



THEMATIC AREA: Protecting land-based ecosystems



Context

Land-based ecosystems and the carbon sinks they comprise are concomitantly Africa's biggest risk and opportunity in the face of projected impacts of climate change. Terrestrial biodiversity conservation is dependent on the protection and restoration of key ecosystems such as forests, wetlands, grasslands, highlands and coastal systems, which all serve as carbon sinks. Human-induced modification of the structure and function of many ecosystems through land use change and degradation has significantly altered the relationships between natural carbon sources and sinks.

Africa's extensive tropical forests, mangroves and rangelands are critical land-based ecosystems in combating global climate change and provide valuable ecosystem services to its people. These ecosystems hold significant carbon stocks, 17.5 billion tons (Gt) of irrecoverable carbon, more than 12% of the world's total. Land degradation remains a major constraint to raising the continent's agricultural productivity, owing to poor soils, reduced fallows, and nutrient mining.



INTRA-ACP GCCA+ PROGRAMME An initiative of the ACP Group of States funded by the European Union's European Development Fund





Priority action areas

- **Develop bankable measures** for ecosystem protection/ restoration, sustainable water resources management and regenerative agriculture.
- **Build technical capacity** for implementing and investing in regenerative and biodiversity positive agricultural systems across the region.
- **Finance sustainable land-based ecosystems** to enhance for climate adaptation and mitigation.
- **Protect key carbon sinks** in all ecosystems found in Africa.
- **Avoid further degradation** of and enhance sustainable management of all ecosystems.
- **Restore and sustainably manage agricultural systems** to reduce and remove greenhouse gas emissions, reduce human-wildlife conflict, enhance food security and water regulation benefits.
- **Integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainable management** in climate change actions.
- **Ensure focus on food security, land-use rights and protection of biodiversity** in projects for ecosystem-based approaches to carbon removal.



Regional policy frameworks

Instruments at the continental level that provide a framework for dealing with climate change, desertification and land degradation include Agenda 2063, the African Ministerial Conference on Environment, and the Malabo Declaration.



Regional flagship initiatives

The Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative is a transboundary African-led initiative to reverse land degradation and desertification in the Sahel and Sahara, boost food security and support local communities to adapt to climate change. By 2030, the Wall aims to restore 100 million hectares of currently degraded land, sequester 250 million tonnes of carbon and create ten million jobs in rural areas. The African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100), in alignment with the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, aims to bring 100 million hectares of degraded land under restoration by 2030.

AFR100 also contributes to the Bonn Challenge, the African Resilient Landscapes Initiative (ARLI), Agenda 2063, the Sustainable Development Goals and other targets. The ARLI mobilises African countries and partners to leverage sectorial interventions and collectively ensure the integrity, resilience, restoration and sustainable management of landscapes across regions.