



PUBLIC FUNDING FOR FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION

ARE DONORS WELL ALIGNED WITH CURRENT CHALLENGES?

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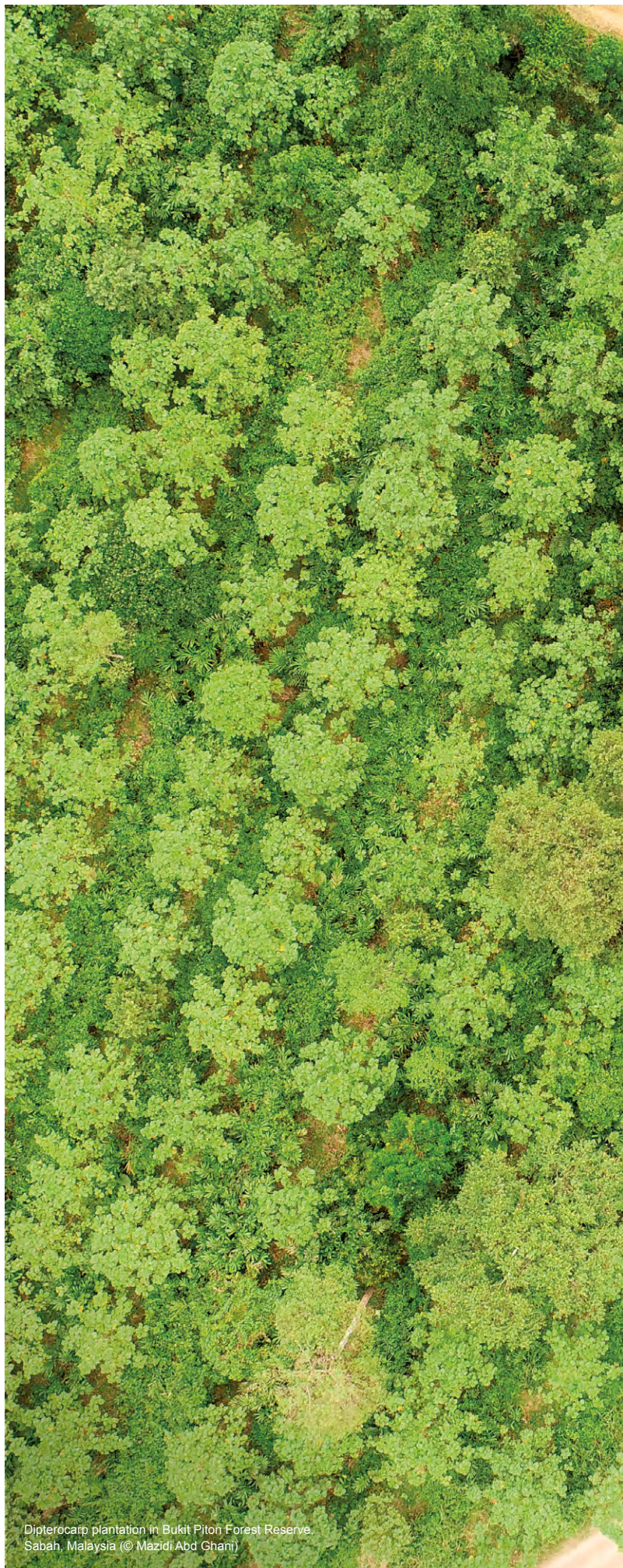
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Dipterocarp plantation in Bukit Piton Forest Reserve, Sabah, Malaysia (© Mazidi Abd Ghani)



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ACRONYMS' LIST

AFD	Agence Française de Développement (France)	MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation (US)
AFR100	African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative	MCE	Ministry of Climate and Environment (Norway)
ART/TREES	Architecture for REDD+ Transactions/The REDD+ Environmental Excellence Standard	MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Norway)
BMF	Federal Ministry of Finance (Germany)	NAP	National Action Programme
BMUV	Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (Germany)	NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans,
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Germany)	NDC	Nationally-Determined Contribution
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity	NDICI	Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument (EU)
CBIT	Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency	NICFI	Norwegian International Climate and Forest Initiative (Norway)
CBNRM	Community-based Natural Resource Management	NOK	Norwegian Krone
COP	Conference of the Parties	NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
DFC	International Development Finance Corporation (US)	NSC	National Security Council (US)
EU	European Union	ODA	Official Development Assistance
EUR	Euros	OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks)
FFEM	Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial (France)	SCCF	Special Climate Change Fund
FLR	Forest Landscape Restoration	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
FLU	Forest and Land Use	SLM	Sustainable Land Management
GCF	Green Climate Fund	TRI	The Restoration Initiative
GEF	Global Environment Facility	UN	United Nations
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (Germany)	UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
GHG	Greenhouse Gas	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
GNI	Gross National Income	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
IKI	The International Climate Initiative (Germany)	UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
IPBES	Inter-governmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services	US	United States of America
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change	USAID	United States Agency for International Development.
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature	USD	United States Dollars
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (Germany)	VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement
LDC	Least-developed Country	WEF	World Economic Forum
LDCF	Least Developed Country Fund		
LEAF	Lowering Emissions by Accelerating Forest finance		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AIMS AND METHODS

Forest landscape restoration (FLR) is a global priority. It is a response to continued forest loss and degradation. It is also an approach to meet multiple political target setting exercises related to restoration such as the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), the Bonn Challenge that aims to bring 350 million ha of degraded and deforested landscapes under restoration by 2035. Governments and public sector multilateral donors are critical funders of FLR. Future funding needs for FLR have been estimated at up to EUR 49 billion per year. In order to meet such needs, a better understanding of the role and interests of public sector donors is necessary. For a selection of donors, we aim to better understand:

- whether and how they are engaging in FLR;
- what type of FLR projects/activities they finance;
- the extent of their financial commitments on FLR;
- their future priorities related to FLR.

To do this, WWF identified four key bilateral donors (France, Germany, Norway and the United States of America (USA)) and three multilateral donors (the European Union (EU), the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF)). These were selected based on a) their interest in forest restoration and b) the interest of the WWF office concerned.

The report relies on both background research and interviews carried out in 2021-2022. Recognising that many donors (Germany being the exception) do not fund actual FLR work, we explored related concepts, such as projects implementing landscape approaches, climate mitigation work, associated forest biodiversity and broader forest work. The aim was not only to understand what activities were currently being funded by donors, but also to identify interests and opportunities to engage them in FLR.

OVERVIEW OF DONORS

- **The Green Climate Fund (GCF)** was set up in 2010 intended to be the key financial vehicle for developing countries to meet their engagements under the global climate agreements. It funds projects across eight 'strategic result areas' including 'Forest and Land Use'. Recent guidance presents a shift towards embracing the broader landscape context of forests and emphasises the three pathways of protection, restoration and sustainable management of forests. Its three largest confirmed donors to date are Japan, the UK and France (GCF website).



- **The Global Environment Facility (GEF)** was set up in 1991 on the eve of the Rio Earth Summit. It became the main instrument to support key multilateral environmental agreements. It is now entering the 8th replenishment period (GEF-8) which started in July 2022 (till June 2026) and includes a new set of priorities with a new 'impact programme' on ecosystem restoration. Its three largest donors to date are the US, Japan and Germany (GEF, 2021b).



- **The European Union (EU)** - as a group of 27 member states - is the largest provider of overseas development assistance (ODA). It committed to a 'New Green Deal' in 2019 which aims to boost the efficient use of resources by moving to a clean, circular economy and to restore biodiversity and cut pollution. In June 2022, the European Commission adopted a proposal for an EU Restoration Law which will be put before the parliament. The EU's top three donor members in 2020 were Germany, France and the UK (statista website) - although this has changed after January 2020 when the UK left the EU.



- **The United States of America (USA)** is the largest bilateral donor globally, contributing nearly a quarter of global ODA at USD 42.3 billion in 2021. USAID's priorities include a large environment and climate change programme with several components including: climate change; conserving biodiversity and forests; securing land tenure and property rights for stability and prosperity; sustainable land management.



- **Germany** is the second largest donor when it comes to ODA. Contributions in 2021 totalled USD 32.2 billion or 0.74% of its gross national income (GNI). In addition to providing funds for forest restoration separately, the development ministry (BMZ) and the environment ministry (BMUV) have cooperated on funding climate and biodiversity projects overseas through the International Climate Initiative (IKI).



- **France** is the fifth largest donor in terms of ODA contributing USD 15.4 billion in 2021. Its priorities include climate change and environmental conservation. The main agencies channelling France's ODA in the environment sector are the Agence française de développement (AFD) and the Fonds Français pour l'environnement mondial (FFEM). The FFEM focuses on five strategic priorities in its 2019-2022 strategy which include: protection and enhancement of biodiversity; sustainable forests and agricultural lands. It also notes the importance of nature-based solutions.



- **Norway** is the tenth largest donor in terms of ODA contributing USD 3.7 billion in 2021, although proportional to its GNI, it is second with ODA representing 0.93% of its GNI. One of Norway's largest programme is the Norwegian International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI) due to run until 2030. It is the world's largest donor to tropical forest conservation in low-and middle-income countries.



PRIORITIES ASSOCIATED WITH FLR

Through a review of donor strategies, four areas of investment emerge as being most relevant to FLR: 1. climate change; 2. biodiversity; 3. rural development, and 4. forestry.

• Climate change

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) as the key instrument under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), supports topics that are of relevance to FLR including 'ecosystems and ecosystem services' and 'forest and land use' (FLU). One of the approaches funded by the GCF is 'improved use of land and reforestation' Latest guidance from the GCF for the FLU area, highlights the need to "restore forests and other degraded land to healthy and resilient landscapes". The Global Environment Facility (GEF) in its 7th replenishment (2018-2022) highlighted the importance of the nexus between climate change, biodiversity, and land degradation. It has prioritised funding notably for 'Food systems, Land Use, and Restoration' which includes "promoting large-scale restoration of degraded landscapes for sustainable production and ecosystem services". Under its 8th replenishment (starting in July 2022) the GEF includes an impact programme on 'Ecosystem Restoration'. Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI) is a major programme to reduce and reverse tropical forest loss, with the aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (but also preserve biodiversity and contribute to sustainable development). Although it prioritises standing forest rather than restoration, depending on context, the NICFI will also fund restoration activities (e.g., in Ethiopia). Climate mitigation has been a priority for Germany which aimed to double its international climate finance by 2020 up to EUR 4 billion per year and further increase climate finance to prospectively EUR 6 billion in 2025. As a co-promoter (together with IUCN) of the Bonn Challenge in 2011, Germany has prioritised FLR as a comprehensive climate solution that also addresses biodiversity priorities. The International Climate Initiative (IKI), set up

in 2009 by BMZ and BMUV, has funded over 750 climate action and biodiversity conservation projects worldwide for a total of over EUR 4.5 billion. France's development agency, AFD, in its 2017-2020 climate and development strategy emphasises both the Paris Agreement and low carbon and climate-resilient trajectories, but fails to explicitly mention forestry or land use. AFD set itself a target to ensure that at least 50% of its annual funding goes to projects with climate co-benefits (totalling about EUR 5 million for climate by 2020) and it also aimed to triple adaptation funding by 2020 to reach EUR 1.2 billion per year. The USA, through its agency USAID, has been funding climate-related activities prioritising adaptation and sustainable landscapes that include protection, management and restoration of forests and other lands with the aim to store carbon, improve livelihoods and resilience. At COP 26 in Glasgow, the USA launched the Forest Investor Club, a network of leading public and private financial institutions and other investors to unlock and upscale investments that support sustainable, climate-aligned outcomes in the land sector. Through its 2019 'New Green Deal', the EU has committed to being climate neutral by 2050 and is developing a restoration strategy as one approach to meet this objective.

• Biodiversity

The EU's biodiversity strategy developed in 2020 refers to "Protecting and restoring biodiversity" as being "key to boost our resilience and prevent the emergence and spread of future diseases." The second component of the EU Biodiversity Strategy - 'An EU Nature Restoration Plan: restoring ecosystems across land and sea' - refers to the need to improve the legal framework for restoration. In light of this, in June 2022 a proposal for an EU Restoration Law was put forward by the Commission. It includes as key areas of focus the long-term and sustained recovery of biodiverse and resilient nature; achieving the EU's climate mitigation and climate adaptation objectives and meeting international commitments. It will be put forward to the parliament for ratification later in 2022. France's FFEM's 2019-2022 strategy includes "protection, enhancement and restoration of biodiversity" while AFD's biodiversity strategy includes the integration of protection and restoration in sectoral policies. For Germany, biodiversity is closely linked to climate action specifically via its forest and wetland work. USAID's sustainable landscapes programmes work across entire landscapes in over 45 countries to protect, manage and restore forests. The GEF, has its largest share of funding set aside for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

• Rural development

The EU's 2023-2027 strategy on agriculture and rural development includes biodiversity and climate change priorities, both of which include forest restoration. It is expected to include for example the need by farmers to increase their contribution to biodiversity by devoting at least 4% of their arable land to non-productive features and areas. In France, AFD's new 2020 strategy on agriculture, rural development and biodiversity includes protection, sustainable management and restoration of ecosystems. In the context of its 2019-2023 strategy for sustainable food systems Norway takes an integrated and holistic approach to food security considering the entire food system. In the USA, the 2022-2026 Global Food



Growing native tree seedlings from the dry tropical forest in a nursery in Mexico (© Daniel Vallauri)

Security Strategy includes research to reduce “global poverty, hunger, and malnutrition, and at the same time reconcile climate change and environmental objectives related to forests and biodiversity conservation”.

• Forestry

In France, under the 2020-2024 strategy on “territorial and ecological transition”, AFD supports sustainable forest management, with a special focus on tenure rights of local populations. Germany has a specific international forest policy which includes three pillars, one of which is restoration and mentions FLR as a way of restoring “forests and productive tree-rich landscapes”. Norway’s work on forests has centred on their role in mitigating climate change (through its International Climate and Forest Initiative - NICFI). Under this programme it supports REDD+¹ programmes with an emphasis to date on avoiding deforestation. USAID takes a comprehensive approach to reforestation that considers the policy and financial environment – including clarifying property rights. The types of restorative activities supported include: agroforestry, plantations, active forest restoration and natural regeneration. The USA committed to the 1 trillion trees campaign (1t.org) promoted under the World Economic Forum (WEF), pledging to improve the protection, restoration, and management of more than one million hectares of natural and planted forests over the next two years. More recently, the ‘Plan to Conserve Global Forests:

Critical Carbon Sinks’ launched at the Glasgow Conference of the Parties (COP) in November 2021 proposes to, among other objectives “Incentivize forest and ecosystem conservation and forest landscape restoration“. The European Commission’s new Forest Strategy includes a roadmap for planting at least 3 billion trees by 2030.

CURRENT FRAMING OF FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION BY PUBLIC DONORS

Although few donors specifically fund projects labelled as ‘FLR’ to date (Germany being the exception), many projects that are funded include key dimensions of FLR, i.e. scale, dual (social and ecological) objectives and some form of reforestation. A financial analysis of FLR projects is constrained both by the inaccuracies in project databases, and by the fact that although some projects may qualify as FLR, they do not use those terms. Furthermore, some donors (e.g., Germany) do not have a comprehensive repository of projects. Searching for the term FLR provides a rough idea of funding to date, with Germany funding FLR projects worth EUR 521 million, Norway funding projects for USD 15 million, EU Horizon 2020 funding projects for EUR 41 million, the GEF funding projects worth USD 62 million and the GCF funding projects for a total of USD 1.162 billion (these amounts are without co-funding). Caution is needed in interpreting these figures and they are not comparable as they also cover different periods.

¹ Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries

Comparing existing projects against the FLR principles highlights that by far the most commonly applied principle is restoring multiple functions, with climate change and food security being generally the most prevalent (although soil conservation, energy and biodiversity conservation are also present in some projects).

THE WAY FORWARD

Funding needs for FLR are significant. While public donors should not be the sole source of funding, their role in supporting the restoration of forests is critical. The donors explored in this report are all major players in funding forests but not necessarily FLR. Yet four key themes that they fund transpire from this research as being associated with FLR: biodiversity, climate change, rural development and forestry.

Public Funding for FLR

Going forward, restoration is expected to continue to attract public funding notably because of the launch of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration in 2021 (till 2030). Some of the key priorities to ensure that public sector funding is directed at projects that meet FLR-like standards include:

- promoting multiple objectives through forest restoration rather than focusing on narrow objectives such as carbon sequestration;
- improving monitoring of long term impacts so as to steer away from short-term efforts;
- seeking to build public-private coalitions to multiply impact in forest restoration;
- improving cross-sectoral collaboration/integration to remove contradictory policies and enhance the efficiency and impact of public sector funding;
- improving cross-convention collaboration at the national level (e.g., among focal points) so that there is a harmonised approach to meeting global objectives associated with climate change, biodiversity and land degradation;
- re-directing a share of subsidies from sectors such as agriculture, rural development or energy towards FLR that provides multiple benefits.

Recommendations

In light of the above, six specific recommendations can be made for the future of public funding for FLR:

- **Recommendation 1: Public donors should re-frame some of their biodiversity, climate, forest or land use priorities around the broader and more encompassing FLR approach, recognising the role of FLR in meeting multiple objectives.** Increasing support to such comprehensive efforts will lead to social and ecological benefits in line with FLR.
- **Recommendation 2: FLR projects that are funded by public donors should better integrate the needs of diverse stakeholder groups.** As public goods, forests should be restored to meet the needs of and benefit a diversity of stakeholders from smallholders located in the landscape to the global community. However, the needs of those most dependent on forests should be prioritised.
- **Recommendation 3: Recognising the long-term nature of ecosystem restoration and FLR more specifically, public donors should enable long-term financing mechanisms for FLR.** Public donors should recognise that the required diversity of interventions and long term commitments to successfully reach sustainability in a given landscape may be seen as a strength rather than a difficulty for FLR public funding efficiency.
- **Recommendation 4: Collaboration should be strengthened among public donors, across sectors and between public and private donors towards FLR** so as to enhance the overall amount of funding available, but also to promote synergies (e.g., geographic priorities). There is an urgent need to scale up restoration and associated funding. Collaboration can help to improve efficiencies (in selecting projects and partners, in carrying out due diligence, in evaluating results etc.) and reduce duplicate or worse still, conflicting, funding allocations.
- **Recommendation 5: The public sector can give impetus to much needed guidance and leadership to better define and measure progress on FLR.** Overall monitoring suffers from lack of common definitions and measures. Public sector donors can set the example through improved datasets, better tools (including online databases) and more transparency.
- **Recommendation 6: A share of subsidies that are directed at some of the sectors associated with the four themes we identified – climate change, biodiversity, rural development and forestry – could be re-directed to FLR.** Public funding through subsidies, if applied to an integrated approach such as FLR, can be a valuable tool to both support cross-sectoral collaboration that is needed for FLR, and to reduce narrow and conflicting approaches resulting from current sectoral subsidies.



Monitoring tree growth in enrichment planting aiming to restore
Moist tropical forest in Sabah - Malaysia (© Mazidi Abd Ghani)

INTRODUCTION

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC DONORS

Governments and public sector multilateral donors have been funding afforestation and reforestation for decades. More recently, since 2000, forest landscape restoration (FLR) is being embraced as a more integrated approach to restoring forested landscapes and there has been steadily growing interest in FLR since the approach was defined in 2000 (Mansourian *et al.*, 2021). Indeed, governments began to embrace FLR in 2011 with the Bonn Challenge to restore 150 million ha by 2020 (later increased to 350 million ha by 2030), followed by the New York Declaration on Forests in 2014. A number of other regional embodiments of the Bonn Challenge (e.g., AFR100, Initiative 20x20 etc.) have also been launched. Funding needs for such large-scale initiatives have been estimated at up to USD 49 billion per year (FAO and Global Mechanism to the UNCCD, 2015).

Several challenges arise: firstly, these amounts are significant and compete with other development and environment priorities such as famine, migration and biodiversity loss; secondly,

FLR is a comprehensive and long-term process and includes many different activities, thus, some projects that may not be called FLR may actually be contributing to this process making it hard to extract data on financing FLR; thirdly, monitoring implementation beyond mere commitments is essential to assessing impacts, ensuring transparency and maintaining donor confidence; fourthly, the role of public versus private financiers in restoration could/should be better framed.

As the world is still reeling from the global Covid-19 pandemic and its tragic human impacts that are compounded by economic impacts, mobilising vast sums of money for FLR may prove more challenging in the short term. Yet paying for restoration should be seen as an investment rather than a cost. At the same time, there is growing recognition of the need for more integrated approaches to development, nature-based solutions, climate change action and to biodiversity conservation; and FLR provides just that.



Taking stock of field experience in Liberty Island (Hungary) to inspire restoration of floodplain forests along the Lower Danube River (© WWF)

WHAT IS FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION?

Forest landscape restoration was first defined in 2000 by a group of experts convened by WWF and IUCN as “a planned process that aims to regain ecological integrity and enhance human wellbeing in deforested or degraded [forest] landscapes” (WWF and IUCN, 2000). It was innovative in that it sought to: 1. scale up restoration to the landscape; and 2. introduce the idea of both social and ecological objectives for forest resto-

ration. Since then, principles for FLR have been developed by the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration (an alliance of several parties interested in FLR, of which WWF, IUCN and the UK Forestry Commission are founding members). These are: 1. focus on landscapes; 2. engage stakeholders and support participatory governance; 3. restore multiple functions for multiple benefits; 4. maintain and enhance natural

ecosystems within landscapes; 5. tailor to the local context using a variety of approaches; 6. manage adaptively for long-term resilience (Besseau *et al.*, 2018). The launch of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) while extending well beyond FLR and forest ecosystems, provides a unique opportunity to expand work on FLR and bring it more squarely into public sector priorities.

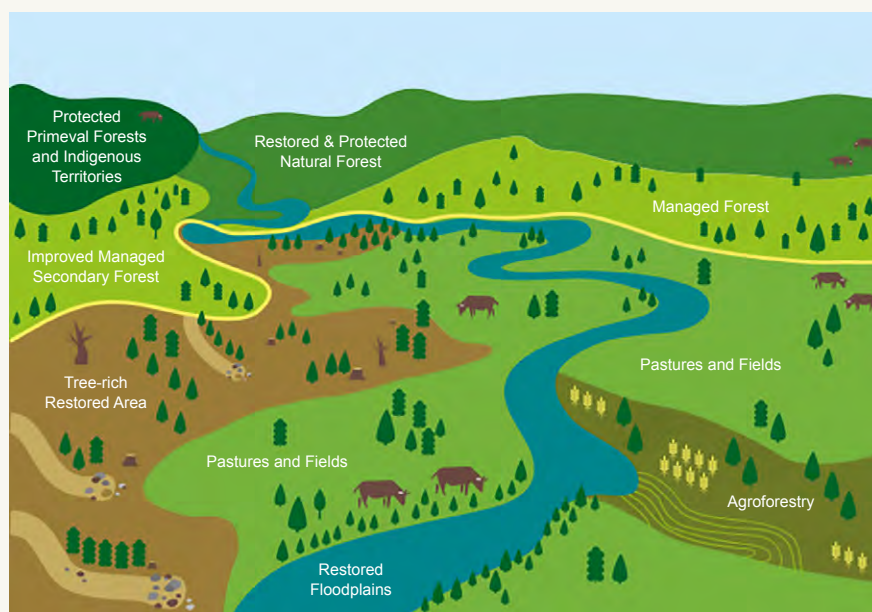


Figure 1. A schematic representation of a forested landscape under restoration (adapted from WRI/IUCN).

Aim of the study

The purpose of this study is to better understand public sector financing of FLR and/or FLR-related activities.

Specifically it aims to identify for four donor countries and three multilateral donors:

1. whether and how they are engaging in FLR;
2. what type of FLR projects/activities they finance;
3. the extent of their financial commitments on FLR;
4. their future priorities related to FLR.








METHODOLOGY

DONORS ANALYSED


The report relies on background research carried out earlier in 2021 donors (with some updating in 2022). WWF identified four key bilateral (France, Germany, Norway and the United States of America (USA)) and three multilateral donors (the European Union (EU), the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF)). These were selected based on a) their interest in forest restoration and b) the interest of the WWF office concerned (Figure 2).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND WEBSITES

The literature review focused on documents produced by the donors. It included donor strategies, fact sheets and policies, and researching their websites, as well as any other available material. The intention was to obtain an overview of the sorts of FLR-related activities that were prioritised by donors and to identify, if relevant, the extent of the donor's engagement in FLR specifically.

DONOR	OVERALL DISBURSEMENT 2021 (USD, billion)	PRIORITY THEMES RELEVANT TO FLR
 US	42.3	Climate change; agriculture; biodiversity; reforestation; land tenure and property rights; knowledge and technology
 GERMANY	32.2	Climate change; international forest policy; biodiversity
 FRANCE	15.4	Biodiversity; agriculture and rural development; climate change; landscape approach.
 EU	18*	Agriculture and rural development; climate and energy framework; biodiversity
 NORWAY	4.7	REDD+; climate; food systems
 GCF	3	Climate mitigation and climate adaptation
 GEF	0.7**	Food systems, land use, and restoration

* in original currency: EUR 16 billion (exchange rates used are for mid-2021). ** July 2020-June 2021.

 **Figure 2.** Disbursements (USD billions; ODA for bilateral donors, total disbursement for multilaterals) and priority theme relevant to FLR of main donors analysed (source: OECD website; EU website; GCF, 2021; GEF, 2020).

PROJECT DATABASES

In addition, online project databases were consulted in September and November 2021 with the main search term being 'forest landscape restoration' and 'forest AND landscape restoration'. The summary of all projects extracted using these search terms were reviewed to ensure that they conformed to the key elements of FLR (i.e. size, and both social and ecological objectives). Links to the project databases can be found in the reference list at the end of this report.

A limitation of this approach has been the quality of the search engines in the databases and their completeness. For example, some of the WWF projects funded by AFD on FLR did not appear on AFD's publicly-available project databases.

INTERVIEWS

This report is also based on additional interviews with key informants from AFD, NICFI and BMUV. Interviews were intended to confirm some key findings, assess future priorities related to FLR and identify any key projects the donor felt was relevant.



Forest protection and passive restoration are possible options in FLR among others, here in Sabah - Malaysia (© Mazidi Abd Ghani)

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF DONORS

A short presentation of the entities analysed is presented below. Four countries have faced elections in the course of this work (the US, Germany, Norway and France). These elections have an impact on official development assistance (ODA)

and priorities for environmental funding. In some cases (e.g., Germany or France) the impact of these elections on ODA and FLR funding is still unclear at the time of writing.



THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) was set up in 2010 under the Cancún Agreements of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It was intended to be the key financial vehicle for developing countries to meet their engagements under the global climate agreements, particularly to help countries meet their nationally-determined contributions (NDCs). The GCF provides grants, concessional debt, guarantees or equity instruments to leverage blended finance and private sector investment.

The GCF funds projects across eight 'strategic result areas':

1. Health, food and water security,
2. Livelihoods of people and communities,
3. Energy generation and access,
4. Transport,
5. Infrastructure and built environ-

- ment,
6. Ecosystems and ecosystem services,
7. Buildings, cities, industries and appliances,
8. Forest and land use.

Within these, it promotes: 1. transformational planning and programming that seeks to maximise the co-benefits between mitigation, adaptation and sustainable development; 2. catalysing climate innovation by investing in new technologies, business models, and practices; 3. Reducing investment risk to mobilise finance at scale (using its leverage power to bring in private funding); 4. mainstreaming climate risks and opportunities into investment decision-making to align finance with sustainable development. The latest guidance for the 'Forest and Land Use' sector recognises its cross-sectoral nature and therefore, the need to plan with other sectors and 'results areas' (such as the ecosystem one in particular) (GCF,

2022). More generally, the recent guidance presents a shift towards embracing the broader landscape context of forests and for instance, emphasises the three pathways of protection, restoration and sustainable management of forests (Ibid.).

The GCF works through partners ('accredited entities') that represent diverse interests, including regional and national development finance institutions, equity funds institutions, United Nations agencies, and civil society organisations. A total of 200 such entities are currently accredited and work directly with developing countries to design and implement projects.



THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) was set up in 1991, on the eve of the Rio Earth Summit. It became the main instrument to support key multilateral environmental agreements: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), The UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Minamata Convention and the Stockholm Convention as well as supporting countries with economies in transition in their implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

Its funding comes from 40 donor countries. Since its creation, the GEF has provided more than USD 21.1 billion in grants (with additional co-funding of USD 114 billion) for over 5,000 projects in 170 countries (GEF, 2021). Each funding cycle is 4 years, and it is now entering the 8th replenishment period (GEF-8) which started in July 2022 (till June 2026). For the 7th replenishment (2018-2022),

the GEF highlighted the importance of the nexus between climate change, biodiversity and land degradation, and developed an 'Impact Programme' on 'food systems, land use and restoration'. In 2022, for the 8th replenishment a new set of priorities has been developed with an overarching focus on 'Healthy People, Healthy Planet' and 'green and blue recovery'. It includes a new 'impact programme' on ecosystem restoration (aligned with the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration – 2021-2030).

The GEF works through 18 implementing agencies (that can apply for funding) including, among others, the World Bank, UNDP, UNEP, IUCN and WWF-US. Funding from the GEF goes to government agencies (main executing agencies), civil society organisations, private sector companies and research institutions. The GEF develops a strategy for each funding cycle which is aligned with the conventions it supports. Since about 2014 (GEF-6) forests and forest restora-

tion started to appear as a prominent theme in the GEF.

In addition to the main GEF fund, the GEF manages five other trust funds: the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT – which since GEF-7 is an integral part of the GEF's Trust Fund and emphasises climate change support), the Nagoya Protocol Implementation Fund (NPIF), the Least Developed Country Fund (LDCF), the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF), and the Adaptation Fund. Of these, the last three are of relevance to restoration and FLR specifically. Both the LDCF and the SCCF came out of the UNFCCC's COP 7 in 2001. Taken together, the LDCF and the SCCF have funded over 330 adaptation projects and programmes, for a total of over USD 1.5 billion to date (GEF, 2018). An estimated 23 million people have benefitted from these projects and 701 institutions strengthened at the regional, national, and sub-national levels (GEF, 2020b).



THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The European Commission is the executive branch of the European Union (EU). As a group of 27 member states, the EU is the largest provider of overseas development assistance (ODA) (OECD website). The EU institutions themselves, however, were 3rd in terms of ODA in 2021, totalling USD 16.1 billion (current prices) ([EU website](#)). In 2020, 23.8% of EU's total bilateral allocable aid (USD 5.4 billion) went to the environment and the Rio Conventions. Nearly all (99%) of EU institutions' aid in 2020 was provided bilaterally ([OECD website](#)). In December 2020, the Council and the European Parliament adopted the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021–2027 with a budget of EUR 1.211 trillion. A further EUR 806.9 billion were made available for both COVID recovery and the EU's sustainability transition under NextGenerationEU (EU, 2022). In this 2021-2027 budget cycle, the EU has committed to spend at least 30% of all resources available (at least EUR 600 billion) to address the climate challenge and aims to support biodiversity objectives with 7.5% of annual spending in 2024 and 10% in 2026 and 2027 (EC, 2021b). In 2021, at the UNFCCC Glasgow COP 26, the EU committed to allocate EUR 1 billion to the Global Forest Finance Pledge to support partner countries to conserve, restore and ensure the sustainable management of forests.

The EU aims to be climate neutral by 2050, and also to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 55% by 2030. To achieve this, in 2019 it committed to the 'New Green Deal' (one of its six priorities for the period 2019-2024) which aims to boost the efficient use of resources by moving to a clean, circular economy and to restore biodiversity and cut pollution. This sets the overarching framework for much of the EU's work in the coming years.

EU funding instruments are divided as domestic (available for EU countries and their partners) and ODA. For example, the NextGenerationEU instrument established in 2020 aims to support recovery after Covid-19 and, among other priorities, includes environmental protection within the EU economy in the framework of the New Green Deal (EU, 2022). Horizon Europe is a transnational programme supporting research and innovation that follows from Horizon 2020. The new LIFE programme (2021-2027) has two main fields of action: environment and climate action (EUR 5.4 billion) with four sub-programmes: nature and biodiversity (EUR 2.15 billion); circular economy and quality of life (EUR 1.350 billion); climate change mitigation and adaptation (EUR 0.95 billion); clean energy transition (EUR 1 billion).

For international 'third country' support (ODA), the EU has a new

instrument: the Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) - Global Europe, which merges several former EU external financing instruments. It aims to contribute to achieving international commitments and objectives, in particular the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement. The total budget for this instrument for 2021-2027 is EUR 79.5 billion ([EU website](#)). Through this instrument the EU will establish international partnerships for sustainable development. It is in the framework of both the New Green Deal and the NDICI that forest partnerships are currently being developed. They aim to deliver on EU international commitments, notably in the context of the REDD+ mechanism, the CBD, the UN declaration on forest, and its own policy framework such as the EU FLEGT Action Plan and the Communication on stepping up EU action to protect and restore the world's forests, as well as delivering on poverty alleviation and human rights. These partnerships will be a tool to protect, restore and ensure the sustainable use and management of forests, promote good forest governance, strengthen forest-based value chains, stimulate stable and legal business environments and ensure the sustainability of trade in forest products and other commodities that drive deforestation ([EU International Partnerships website](#)).



US

The United States (US) is the largest bilateral donor globally, contributing nearly a quarter of global official development assistance (ODA) at USD 42.3 billion in 2021 (donortracker). Nevertheless, in comparison to its economy this amount represents only 0.18% of gross national income (GNI), ranking the US 23rd out of the 29 donor country members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee ([OECD website](#)).

ODA comes from the federal budget which is divided into budget 'functions'. Most development-related spending comes from the International Affairs Budget, which includes both ODA and non-ODA funds (operating embassies, military assistance, and promotion of US exports) ([OECD website](#)). Development priorities are outlined by the US State Department, responsible for foreign policy, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Under President Biden, an interim national security strategy was developed in March 2021 which frames how the US engages with the rest of the world ([The White House, 2021](#)). As of February 2021, the USAID administrator is a member of the US' national security council (NSC) which is chaired by the president.

This body discusses not only security but also foreign policy. Having a seat on the NSC gives USAID more weight within the administration, as opposed to being beholden to the State Department and typically more short-term/political interests.

The main agencies responsible for development funding are:

- 1. USAID** whose mission is "On behalf of the American people, [to] promote and demonstrate democratic values abroad, and advance a free, peaceful, and prosperous world" ([USAID website](#)). It mainly provides grants and its work is intricately linked to that of the State Department and therefore, to State security. USAID's priorities include a large environment and climate change programme with several components, including: environmental and natural resource management framework; global climate change, conservation biodiversity and forests; sustainable urbanisation and global progress and security; securing land tenure and property rights for stability and prosperity; sustainable land management, among others.

One of the four goals of the 2018-2022 strategic plan for the State Department and USAID,

is to promote the transition to a low-emission, climate resilient world while expanding global access to sustainable energy. Climate and agriculture are among the top priorities for development assistance, although environmental considerations more generally also have a relatively high profile.

- 2. The investment arm of the US' ODA is the **International Development Finance Corporation (DFC)**** which was set up in 2020 with, as one of its main objectives, investing in projects that yield high impact in developing countries. DFC's new authorities include taking equity stakes in addition to loan guarantees, political risk insurance, and issuing debt. Its total investment cap reaches USD 60 billion ([DFC website](#)).

- 3. the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)** is a smaller development agency established by the US Congress in 2004 that forms partnerships with developing countries that are committed to good governance, economic freedom and investing in their citizens. It provides 5-year grants which are country-led, and includes FLR-relevant topics in its priorities such as land rights and access to land ([MCC website](#)).



GERMANY

Germany is the second largest donor when it comes to official development assistance (ODA). Contributions in 2021 totalled USD 32.2 billion. Compared to GNI that represents 0.74%. It provides most of its ODA (62.2% in 2020) bilaterally and, in 2020, 20.3% of its ODA was provided as core contributions to multilateral organisations, including the EU.

In 2020, Germany committed USD 9.7 billion (41.2% of its total bilateral allocable aid) in support of the environment and the Rio Conventions down from 49.4% in 2019 ([OECD online](#)).

The main agencies responsible for development assistance are:

- **the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)** which provides the strategic lead. In its new 2020 strategy, BMZ highlights the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and fighting poverty (BMZ, 2020b). It has identified five megatrends within which it frames its development policy: demographic

development, resource scarcity, climate change, digital technology and interdependence, and displacement and migration.

Environmental protection and natural resources (biodiversity, forest protection and water) represent one of BMZ's five key themes prioritised for the 2020-2030 period (donortracker website).

- **the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV)** is also a key player although its budget is smaller. Since 2009 it has been more involved in funding climate and biodiversity projects overseas through the International Climate Initiative (IKI).

- **KfW (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau)**. KfW is a public financial entity, 80% owned by the German state and the rest by the German Länder. Most of its funding comes from its market investments, and 10% comes from the German government. KfW has several branches, one of which

is its development arm. In this respect, KfW provides both grants and loans (KfW, 2020).

- **GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH)** is a service provider in international cooperation for sustainable development. It is a public entity, owned by the Federal Republic of Germany, represented by BMZ and the Federal Ministry of Finance (BMF). It carries out contracts for several clients, the main one being the German government as it implements a large number of environmental projects funded by BMZ.

The International Climate Initiative has funded over 750 climate action and biodiversity conservation projects worldwide for a total of over EUR 4.5 billion.

Both GIZ and KfW are responsible for implementing bilateral cooperation, and are involved in policy development, priority setting and implementation (e.g., Bonn Challenge, FLR Implementation Hub, AFR100 etc.).



FRANCE

France is the fifth largest donor in terms of ODA (fifth in terms of its ODA/GNI ratio) (OECD website). Its total ODA has steadily gone up, reaching EUR 15.4 billion in 2021 (OECD website). Overall 70.3% of France's ODA is through bilateral aid (totalling USD 12 billion in 2020 – [OECD website](#)). The remainder is divided between European assistance and multilateral mechanisms such as the GEF or the GCF (Diplomatie.gouv.fr). Among France's ODA priorities are climate change and environmental conservation.

The main agencies channelling France's ODA in the environment sector are the Agence française de développement (AFD) and the Fonds Français pour l'environnement mondial (FFEM). The **AFD** is the main public sector entity that finances development through both grants and loans. The

AFD Group's mission is "to help construct a world in common, a world that preserves and protects five important "common goods": people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership." All of its interventions are underpinned by five foundational commitments: "100% Paris Agreement, 100% social link, 3D development thinking, non-sovereign first and partnership design" (AFD website). AFD's subsidiary PROPARCO is a private sector financing arm that gives financing and support for projects led by companies and financial institutions in developing and emerging countries.

The FFEM was established by the French government in 1994 to promote the protection of the global environment in developing countries. It is an inter-ministerial funding instrument and prioritises the African and Mediterranean

regions (70% of its funding), partnerships with Francophone actors, innovation and mainstreaming environmental components into development projects. The FFEM focuses on five strategic priorities in its 2019-2022 strategy: protection and enhancement of biodiversity; sustainable forests and agricultural lands; resilience of aquatic ecosystems; energy transition and resilient cities; product life cycle, pollution, and waste. It also notes the importance of nature-based solutions (NbS) defined as "*actions to protect, sustainably manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems, which address societal challenges (e.g. climate change, food and water security or natural disasters) effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits*". (Cohen-Shacham *et al.*, 2016) - and FLR is a key NbS.



NORWAY

Norway is the tenth largest donor for ODA but with respect to its gross national income (GNI), it appears as second with ODA representing 0.93% of its GNI (donortracker). Its ODA budget has steadily grown until 2020, then dropped in 2021 followed by an increase in 2022 to USD 4.7 billion (Ibid). Funding for ODA comes from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Ministry of Climate and Environment (MCE), thereby underscoring the importance of the environment in ODA (Ibid.). Norway's provides its funding to a large extent through multilateral organisations (56%), with the World Bank Group being one of its main recipients.

The main agencies responsible for development funding are:

- **NORAD** – This is the main development cooperation agency and it falls under the Norwegian MFA. It also manages the International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI), which falls under the MCE (NORAD website).
- **Norfund** – This is Norway's development finance institution

which is a state-owned investment fund. It also falls under the MFA. Norfund was established in 1997 and aims to fund the development of sustainable businesses in developing countries (lower middle income countries). Its investments are aligned with the SDGs. Climate and environment is one of four cross-cutting issues Norfund considers in all of its investments (Norfund strategy 2019-2022). By the end of 2019, Norfund was managing investments worth over NOK 24.9 billion (USD 3.1 billion) (donortracker website).

Bilateral cooperation is led by Norwegian embassies directly in partner countries (donortracker). In 2020, about 23% of ODA went to partners in civil society (NORAD website).

In 2020, the budget line 'climate, environment and oceans' totalled NOK 1,510 million (USD 182 million), out of a total ODA budget of NOK 38,104 million (4%), or 6% of the thematic cooperation (excluding bilateral and multilateral funding) (donortracker website). The new government elected in 2021 announced its priority areas

for ODA to be: 1) climate and clean energy; 2) the fight against hunger; 3) the fight against inequality; 4) women's rights; 5) humanitarian assistance; and 6) the fight against infectious diseases.

One of Norway's largest programme is the NICFI due to run until 2030. Through this programme Norway has pledged up to NOK 3 billion (USD 369 million) per year to reduce deforestation (donortracker website). It is the world's largest donor to tropical forest conservation in low- and middle-income countries (Norwegian Ministries, 2019). One of its priorities for 2020 related to providing universal, free access to detailed satellite images of the rainforest (support to Global Forest Watch) (NORAD website).

Norway also announced in February 2020 a doubling of its annual contribution to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for the period 2020-2023, reaching NOK800 million (USD 98 million) per year (donortracker website).



Participatory planting campaign in Paraguay (© WWF-Paraguay)

THEMES OF RELEVANCE TO FLR

Through a review of donor strategies, four areas of investment emerge as being most relevant to FLR:

- **Climate change** (focusing on reforestation/afforestation and restoration as mitigation strategies, including through REDD+);
- **Biodiversity** (with a focus on forest biodiversity);
- **Rural development** (focusing more specifically on agroforestry and community forestry);
- **Forestry** (focusing on relevant reforestation/afforestation activities).

These are explored in more detail below.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Understanding of the role of forests – and specifically forest restoration - in climate change mitigation has grown in the last 20 years. Already in 2007, REDD+ agreed under the UNFCCC explicitly recognised the role of forest restoration in climate mitigation (through the ‘enhancement of carbon stocks’). The Paris Agreement in 2015 was a critical milestone, with text under Article 5 of the legally-binding Agreement also referring explicitly to the “enhancement of forest carbon stocks” (UN, 2015). In 2021, the Intergovernmental Platform on Climate Change (IPCC) reiterated the importance of carbon removal and storage in reversing our climate crisis.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) supports topics that are of relevance to FLR including ‘ecosystems and ecosystem services’ and ‘forest and land use’ (FLU). Specifically, in the framework of mitigation, one of the approaches funded by the GCF is ‘improved use of land and reforestation’. Latest guidance from the GCF (GCF, 2022) for the FLU area, highlights the need to “restore forests and other degraded land to healthy and resilient landscapes”. Its priority through restoration is primarily to conserve large ‘high carbon stocks’ (such as the Amazon or the Congo Basin). In its 7th replenishment (2018–2022), **the Global Environment Facility (GEF)** highlighted the importance of the nexus between climate change, biodiversity, and land degradation. One of its priority programmes was the ‘Impact Programme’ on ‘Food systems, Land Use, and Restoration’ which included “promoting large-scale restoration of degraded landscapes for sustainable production and

ecosystem services” (GEF, 2019). Its new programme (GEF-8) will also emphasise ‘ecosystem restoration’. The LDCF – also managed by the GEF - is aimed at least developed countries (LDCs) that are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and supports projects that include among others, agriculture and food security, disaster risk management and prevention, and fragile ecosystems. The SCCF funds climate vulnerable sectors for adaptation and technology transfer and includes projects related to agriculture, water resources management, disaster risk management, infrastructure, natural resource management and integrated coastal zone management. The Adaptation Fund aims to strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability of developing countries to the impacts of climate change and includes sustainable land and forest management.

At the bilateral scale, **Norway’s** NICFI is a major programme to reduce and reverse tropical forest loss, in the context of reducing greenhouse gas emissions (but also preserving biodiversity and contributing to sustainable development). Norway has pledged up to NOK 3 billion (USD 369 million) per year under this programme (donortracker website) which is due to run until 2030. Much of the funding provided by the NICFI has focused on avoiding deforestation, notably through strengthening governance. However, in specific contexts it also supports reforestation where relevant (e.g., in Ethiopia). In April 2021, alongside the US and the UK and a number of private companies (including Amazon, Airbnb, Bayer, Boston Consulting Group, GSK, McKinsey, Nestlé, Salesforce, and Unilever), Norway joined the LEAF (Lowering Emissions by Accelerating Forest finance) Coalition, a public-private coalition committed to mobilise more than USD 1 billion to protect tropical forests and enhance global climate action. The Coalition makes use of the ART/TREES (Architecture for REDD+ Transactions/ The REDD+ Environmental Excellence Standard) standard to certify projects (LEAF coalition website and ART/TREES website).

At this stage, the ART/TREES certification does not yet credit emission removals associated with reforestation, afforestation, enhancement of forest carbon stocks, or improved forest management (although it plans to do so in a future iteration).

Climate mitigation has been a priority for Germany as well, with the country aiming to double its international climate finance by 2020 up to four billion euros per year (BMZ,



2019). More recently, (2021) State Secretary Jochen Flasbarth (Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nuclear Safety and Natural Conservation) noted the intention to further increase climate finance to prospectively EUR 6 billion in 2025 (UK government website). About 35% of Germany's bilateral aid in 2020 focused on climate change ([OECD website](#)). In turn, the German environment ministry, BMUV, provides EUR 120 million every year to the International Climate Initiative (IKI) (BMUV website). This initiative, set up in 2009, has funded over 750 climate action and biodiversity conservation projects worldwide for a total of over EUR 4.5 billion (IKI website). Its main focus areas are: (i) mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, (ii) adapting to the impacts of climate change, (iii) conserving natural carbon sinks with a focus on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) and (iv) conserving biological diversity. As a promoter (together with IUCN) of the Bonn Challenge in 2011, Germany has prioritised FLR as a comprehensive climate solution that also addresses biodiversity priorities.

In France, the development agency, AFD, in its 2017-2022 climate and development strategy identified four priority areas (i) ensuring a 100% Paris Agreement-compatible activity, (ii) increasing the volume of climate finance, (iii) contributing to redirecting finance and investment flows, and (iv) co-building solutions and bringing influence to bear on standards. While the strategy emphasises both the Paris Agreement and low carbon and climate-resilient trajectories, it fails to explicitly mention forestry or land use. AFD set itself a measurable objective to ensure that at least 50% of its annual funding goes to projects with climate co-benefits (totalling about EUR 5 million

for climate by 2020) and it also aimed to triple adaptation funding by 2020 to reach more than EUR 1.2 billion per year (AFD, 2017).

With President Biden taking office in 2021, the US reintegrated global climate agreements. Notwithstanding, USAID has been funding climate-related activities (even under President Trump) prioritising adaptation and sustainable landscapes that include protection, management and restoration of forests and other lands with the aim to store carbon, improve livelihoods and resilience (USAID website; USAID, 2016). In 2022 USAID launched a new Climate Strategy (2022-2030) with the overarching goal to “advance equitable and ambitious actions to confront the climate crisis” (USAID, 2022). It is organised around six high-level targets: mitigation; adaptation; natural and managed ecosystems; country support; finance and critical populations. At COP 26 in Glasgow, the US launched the Forest Investor Club, a network of leading public and private financial institutions and other investors gathered under one banner to unlock and scale up investments that support sustainable, climate-aligned outcomes in the land sector (US State Department website).

At the European level, through its 2019 ‘New Green Deal’, the EU has committed to being climate neutral by 2050 and has committed to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 55% by 2030 (EU, 2022). Restoration (of forests, soils, wetlands and peatlands) is one approach promoted to meet this objective and in 2022 a milestone has been reached with the proposal for a new Restoration Law (to be ratified by the European Parliament later in 2022).

BIODIVERSITY

While protection is the primary means of conserving biodiversity, restoration plays a key role in contributing to biodiversity conservation where protection is no longer sufficient. FLR provides an approach that aims to decrease pressures on forest ecosystems, and improve both the state of biodiversity and human wellbeing. Thus, donor strategies that focus on biodiversity may also include restoration.

For example, restoration has an explicit mention in:

- **the EU's** biodiversity strategy developed in 2020 notes that "Protecting and restoring biodiversity and well-functioning ecosystems is therefore key to boost our resilience and prevent the emergence and spread of future diseases. Planting trees and deploying green infrastructure will help us to cool urban areas and mitigate the impact of natural disasters" (EC, 2020). In addition, the second component of the EU Biodiversity Strategy - 'An EU Nature Restoration Plan: restoring ecosystems across land and sea' - refers to the need to improve the legal framework for restoration, establishing legally-binding restoration targets by 2022. As such, a proposal for an EU Restoration Law was put forward by the Commission in 2022 that includes as key areas the long-term and sustained recovery of biodiverse and resilient nature; achieving the EU's climate mitigation and climate adaptation objectives and meeting international commitments. This legislation will be put forward for ratification by the Council and the European Parliament later in 2022 (EU website).
- **In France**, the FFEM's 2019-2022 strategy (FFEM, 2019) includes 'protection, enhancement and restoration of biodiversity'. In turn, AFD's biodiversity strategy includes the integration of protection and restoration in sectoral policies.

- **For Germany**, biodiversity is closely linked to climate action specifically through its forest work.

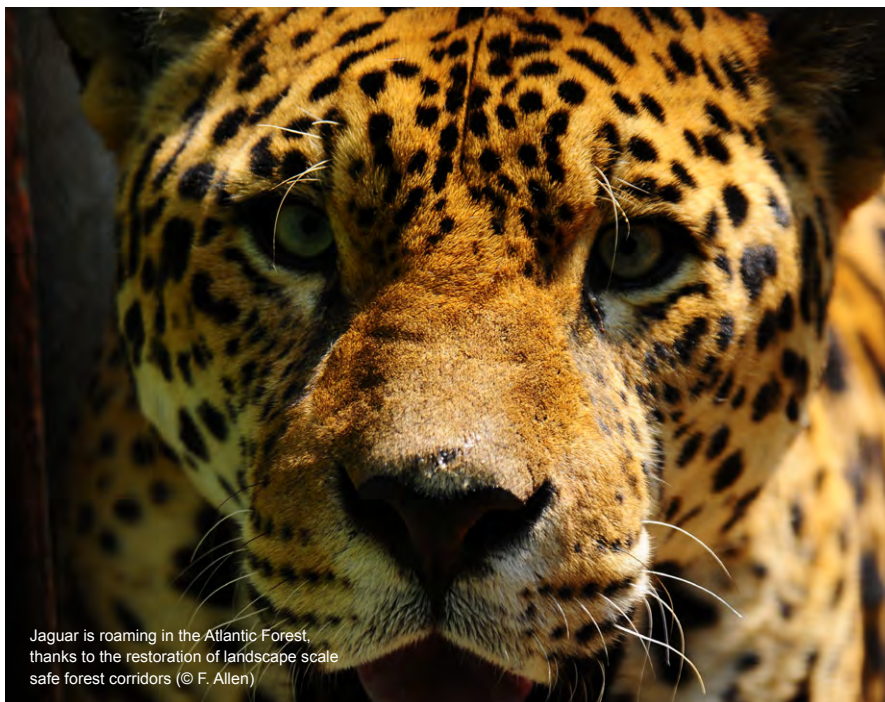
- **USAID's** sustainable landscapes programmes work across entire landscapes in over 45 countries to protect, manage and restore forests (biodiversitylinks.org). Much of its approach to natural resource conservation includes improving governance to secure long term impacts.

- **The GEF**, which finances work under the main environmental conventions, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), has its largest share of funding set aside for the CBD (an estimated USD 2.9 billion since the GEF's establishment in 1991). Since 2014 (with the launch of the GEF's sixth replenishment) forests and forest restoration started to appear as a prominent theme in the GEF.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

There is growing recognition that food security, climate change and biodiversity are intertwined and crises associated with all three need to be addressed jointly. The role of forest restoration in recovering soil health, capturing carbon and expanding viable habitats for species is fundamental. Agroforestry and community forestry are two approaches compatible with forest landscape restoration that provide real and effective solutions for farmers and rural communities, thereby addressing both local (food) and global (climate) concerns.

Within **the EU**, approximately one third of the budget is attributed to the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP). The 2023-2027 strategy on agriculture and rural development includes biodiversity and climate change priorities, both of which include forest restoration. It is expected to include for example the



Jaguar is roaming in the Atlantic Forest, thanks to the restoration of landscape scale safe forest corridors (© F. Allen)



FLR includes the mobilisation of women's groups to develop alternative activities generating new incomes for communities in the Copalita watershed of Mexico (© WWF Mexico)

need by farmers to increase their contribution to biodiversity by devoting at least 4% of their arable land to non-productive features and areas. Several of its objectives further strengthen the recognition that biodiversity and agriculture, as well as climate change, are intricately linked.

In France, **AFD's** new 2020 strategy on agriculture, rural development and biodiversity (AFD, 2020) includes protection, sustainable management and restoration of ecosystems. It supports projects that include agroforestry, agroecology and landscape management. Governance of landscapes is also a priority for AFD including through improving community-based governance, tenure rights and strengthening local capacities (AFD, 2020).

In the context of its 2019-2023 strategy for sustainable food systems **Norway** takes an integrated and holistic approach to food security (Norwegian Ministries, 2019). As such, assistance in this area considers the entire food system, including climate, environment, infrastructure and institutions.

In the **US**, the 2022-2026 Global Food Security Strategy was launched in late 2021 and aims to end global hunger, poverty, and malnutrition through the Feed the Future initiative. This initiative includes research which the strategy deems important as an investment to reduce "global poverty, hunger, and malnutrition, and at the same time reconcile climate change and environmental objectives related to forests and biodiversity conservation" (US Government, 2021). It views food production and agriculture in a wider context that includes forests, water and ecosystems more generally. Agroforestry is included as one of the options to combine multiple objectives.

FORESTRY

Most countries and institutions analysed had a distinct forestry or forest strategy, with forests appearing across different elements as noted in the previous sections. In **France**, under the 2020-2024 strategy on 'territorial and ecological transition', AFD supports sustainable forest management, with a special focus on tenure rights of local populations (AFD, 2020b). **Germany** on the other hand has a specific international forest policy which includes three pillars, one of which is restoration. This pillar explicitly mentions FLR as a way of restoring 'forests and productive tree-rich landscapes' (BMZ, 2017). As a champion of FLR, Germany also has specific FLR-related funding instruments and projects:

- The Federal Environment Ministry (BMUV) and the Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ) joined forces in 2008 under the International Climate Initiative (IKI) which has funded several FLR projects (e.g., the FLR Implementation Hub).
- The PROGREEN multilateral fund hosted by the World Bank received EUR 200 million from BMZ (BMZ, 2020). It focuses on protection and restoration of forests.
- With a EUR 20 million investment from BMUV from 2020-2027, the Restoration Seed Capital Facility (managed by UNEP) is intended to support early-stage development of FLR projects in developing countries, so as to contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity, and sustainable livelihoods. The project combines reimbursable and non-reimbursable grants to leverage private capital.



Production of native tree seedlings in Madagascar
 (© A. Razafimahatratra)

- BMZ provides ongoing support to the African embodiment of the Bonn Challenge: the AFR100, which it helped set up.
- Germany is also one of the first investors in the multi-donor trust fund to support the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

Norway's work on forests has centred on their role in mitigating climate change (through its International Climate and Forest Initiative - NICFI). Under this programme it supports REDD+ programmes with an emphasis on avoiding deforestation. Nevertheless, depending on national contexts it also supports forest restoration, as is the case in Ethiopia for example.

USAID explicitly prioritises reforestation in 11 countries (including for example, Guatemala and India), taking a comprehensive approach to reforestation that considers the policy and financial environment – including clarifying property rights. The types of restorative activities supported include: agroforestry, plantations, active forest restoration and natural regeneration (USAID, 2020). The US committed to the 1 trillion trees campaign (1t.org) promoted under the World Economic Forum (WEF), pledging to improve the protection, restoration, and management of more than one million hectares of natural and planted forests over the next two years (USAID, 2019). Other related activities supported by USAID include projects that support legal policy and institutional reforms, capacity building and technical assistance, among others, with the aim to improve the effectiveness of property

rights and land governance systems (USAID website; landlinks.org). The US has also championed technological tools to better monitor forest cover, of direct relevance to FLR and reforestation more generally. More recently, the 'Plan to Conserve Global Forests: Critical Carbon Sinks' launched at the Glasgow COP in November 2021 proposes to, among other objectives "Incentivize forest and ecosystem conservation and forest landscape restoration" (The White House, 2021).

In its new Forest Strategy, the **European Commission** recognises that in order to transition to a more carbon neutral continent, it will need "larger, healthier and more diverse forests than we have today, notably for carbon storage and sequestration, reduction of the effects of air pollution on human health and halting loss of habitats and species" (EC, 2021). The Strategy includes a roadmap for planting at least 3 billion trees by 2030.

FRAMING OF FLR

The understanding and framing of FLR (and associated actions) differs according to different donors (Table 1). **Germany** for example is a champion of FLR, while others do not mention it in their strategies and communications. For example, a search of **AFD**'s online project database for 'forest landscape restoration' yields no results. Yet in 2012 it funded a project entitled 'Assam Project on Forest and Biodiversity Conservation (APFBC)' which aims to restore forest ecosystems, protect wildlife and enhance the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities. With its long-term nature (12 years), large scale (state of Assam) and dual social and ecological dimensions, the project exhibits strong links with FLR. The types of activities carried out are also synonymous with many of the supportive FLR activities, such as building the capacity of the forest administration; drawing up and implementing participatory plans for forest management and protected areas, and providing alternative livelihoods, including improving access to markets. In addition, WWF has received support for FLR in Madagascar from AFD but those projects fail to appear on their online database with the same search terms, suggesting that other related projects may also not be appearing. A more detailed analysis of funded projects is required to find projects that are relevant to FLR.

In contrast, **Germany** is a strong supporter and advocate of FLR. The terminology 'forest landscape restoration' is used directly by both BMZ and BMUV, and both have funded numerous projects related to FLR. Although neither BMZ nor BMUV have a web-based project database, a search on the project database of GIZ (a major implementer of German development projects) for 'forest landscape restoration' yields seven results. In Ghana for example, BMUV funds a 4-year project (2019-2023) entitled 'Forest Landscape Restoration through a Sustainable Wood Energy Value Chain' which takes a comprehensive approach to tackling some of the causes of forest loss (wood energy production), building capacity, improving policies and planting trees. BMZ has supported a major FLR programme in Germany, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, Laos since 2020 entitled 'Forests4Future: Giving forests a future'. More recently, BMUV has initiated support for the development of the FLR Implementation Hub, under the coordination of IUCN in partnership with WWF and WRI, to implement FLR in six countries in Latin America (Brazil, Colombia and Peru) and in Africa (Madagascar, Tanzania and Uganda) for 5 years (2022- 2027- EUR 20 million).

Norway does not promote FLR per se although restoration is part of REDD+. For example, it supported IUCN with a project entitled 'Mobilising private investment for community-based,

carbon-intensive landscape restoration - Private Investment in Landscape Restoration – PILaR' between 2013-2015 in Brazil, Ghana, Guatemala, Mexico as well as some global activities. The project contributed to increasing capacity to negotiate FLR opportunities in the target countries and at the global level and also helped Brazil and Guatemala to develop national restoration strategies, amongst other outputs. A search on their online database over the period 2015-2020 reveals that Norway funded two projects related to FLR. Although centring on national action, the **US** committed 15 million ha under the Bonn Challenge, one of the only donor countries to have done so.

In response to the fact that 98% of GEF-eligible countries included landscape restoration and reforestation as a priority in their nationally-determined contributions (NDCs), National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), and UNCCD National Action Programmes (NAPs), the **GEF**'s seventh replenishment (GEF-7) included a dedicated impact programme on restoration that aims to "generate multiple environmental benefits through the restoration of degraded land, and important ecosystems including forests." (GEF, 2017). A search on the GEF's online project database for FLR identified a total of 14 projects. Under GEF-7 (up to June 2022) area of land restored is tracked with progress on the indicator reported at 8.2 million ha (GEF, 2022; although it is not clear how this is counted and what it includes). The GEF-8 replenishment (2022-2026) also includes a restoration programme.

The GCF finances much larger and more comprehensive programmes (covering multiple activities such as institutional support, capacity building, alternative farming techniques, tree planting etc.), with the smallest ones being around USD 10 million. A search on the GCF online database for FLR yielded 49 results, although many are not about FLR per se, suggesting that the search function is not accurate.

↓ **Table 1.** Donors' framing of FLR.

DONOR	USE OF THE TERM FLR	COMMITMENT TO FLR-RELATED INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES	COMMENTS
 AFD	No		Since 2021 beginning to engage more actively in restoration
 BMZ/BMUV	Yes. Strong advocate since 2011	Co-lead for the Bonn Challenge	Sees FLR as particularly important in the framework of its climate strategy
 NICFI	No	REDD+	Strong emphasis on forests as a climate solution with more emphasis on tackling deforestation and degradation and protection than restoration (although that is shifting and is context specific).
 USAID	Limited	Committed to Bonn Challenge and 1t.org	Emphasis on forest restoration more generally and on integrated approaches to conservation/restoration
 EU	No	Proposed new law on ecosystem restoration	Includes references to restoration as a priority in its new Forest Strategy to 2030 and the New Green Deal
 GEF	Limited – project-specific	GEF-8 has an impact programme on 'ecosystem restoration'	Specific impact (integrated) programme on 'food systems, land use and restoration' since 2018 (GEF-7) and one on 'ecosystem restoration' in GEF-8.
 GCF	Yes	In its latest guidance, the GCF uses the term FLR alongside reforestation (more traditionally used in the UNFCCC).	Reforestation/afforestation are eligible under the GCF

DONOR-FUNDED PROJECTS

Forest landscape restoration is typically made up of numerous actions over time. As a result some programmes that are aligned with FLR may not actually be called FLR programmes. At the same time, some programmes that are called FLR, may not be fully aligned with the FLR principles.

FLR ALIGNMENT OF SELECTED PROJECTS

Two distinguishing features of FLR are its scale (landscapes) and its focus on both ecological and social benefits. Typically, FLR projects are also implemented over the long term. In practice, FLR projects can cover a wide range of activities including research, capacity building, tenure issues, forestry and agriculture amongst others (Mansourian *et al.*, 2021b). Taken alone none of these activities constitute FLR, but such a comprehensive package of interventions may be necessary depending on starting socio-ecological conditions and desired long term FLR objective(s). The project examples highlighted below and in Table 2 illustrate some of these diverse interventions associated with FLR.

A search for ‘forest landscape restoration’ on the **GCF**’s online project database (November 2021) yielded 49 results (starting in 2016) for a total value of USD 3.127 billion.

The GCF-funded community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) project in Timor Leste intends to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and enhance carbon sequestration through reforestation activities. The project responds to key criteria for FLR such as:

- landscape scale – 78,363 ha
- reconciling both human and ecological dimensions – building local capacity to engage in CBNRM and mitigate climate change impacts, while reducing deforestation and forest degradation.
- long term – the project is over a period of 7 years.

In Rwanda, the GCF is funding a 6-year project in the Eastern Province entitled: ‘Transforming Eastern Province through Adaptation’. This project under the ‘cross-cutting’ theme of

the GCF aims “to achieve a paradigm shift in land management practices from landscapes that are degraded, fragile and unable to sustain livelihoods in the face of climate change to restored ecosystems and landscapes through building community resilience to enhance livelihoods, food and water security of the most vulnerable rural population”. In contrast to the Timor Leste project, this one refers explicitly to FLR. Furthermore, it is aligned with key FLR dimensions such as:

- landscape scale – 981,300 ha
- reconciling both human and ecological dimensions – contributing to the diversification of livelihoods, strengthening farmer capacities and reducing poverty through generation of employment and income across a portfolio of value chains as well as the rehabilitation and sustainable management of woodlots and tree plantations for productive and ecological services.
- long term – the project is over a period of 6 years

Under **the EU’s Horizon 2020** scheme between 2014-2020 three programmes (seven grants) related to restoration were funded:

- Strengthening international cooperation on sustainable urbanisation: nature-based solutions for restoration and rehabilitation of urban ecosystems
- ERA-NET co-fund action on conservation and restoration of degraded ecosystems and their biodiversity, including a focus on aquatic systems
- More effective ecosystem restoration in the EU

A search for ‘forest landscape restoration’ on the **GEF** online project database yielded 14 results (in November 2021), for a total of USD 369,252,195 – spanning three GEF replenishment periods (GEF 5, GEF-6 and GEF-7). The Restoration Initiative (TRI) (USD 30,441,961) started in 2018, is led by IUCN in collaboration with FAO and UNEP and has an international component as well as ‘child projects’ in 10 Asian and African countries: Cameroon, China, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sao Tomé and Príncipe and the United Republic of Tanzania. The aim is to advance implementation of Bonn Challenge goals.

An assessment of existing projects against the FLR principles (Besseau *et al.*, 2018; Table 3) highlights that by far the most commonly applied principle is restoring multiple functions, with climate change and food security being generally the most prevalent (although soil conservation, energy and biodiversity

conservation are also present in some projects). For example, the GCF-funded project in Armenia ('Forest resilience of Armenia, enhancing adaptation and rural green growth via mitigation') highlights the importance of forests for both food and energy security.

Table 2. Examples of projects related to FLR.









PROJECT	DONOR	OBJECTIVE
Community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) project in Timor Leste	GCF	To build local capacity to engage in CBNRM and mitigate climate change impacts, while reducing deforestation and forest degradation.
Transforming Eastern Province through Adaptation in Rwanda	GCF	To contribute to the diversification of livelihoods, strengthening farmer capacities and reducing poverty through generation of employment and income across a portfolio of value chains as well as the rehabilitation and sustainable management of woodlots and tree plantations for productive and ecological services.
The Restoration Initiative (TRI)	GEF	To advance implementation of Bonn Challenge goals.
Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) and Sustainable Land Management (SLM) in the Sahel Region	AFD	To restore landscapes and develop income-generating activities. Also to promote knowledge sharing and advocacy for FLR/SLM.
Private Investment in Landscape Restoration - PILaR	NORAD	To facilitate sustainable forest landscapes that enhance carbon stocks and improve social and economic returns to farmers, communities and investors (Brazil, Ghana, Guatemala, Mexico and also included global activities) via private sector investments.
Lebanon Reforestation Initiative	USAID	To develop an efficient and cost-effective method for the reforestation of Lebanon's degraded and historically deforested lands (Phase I); to create an environment that would contribute to improved social stability and sectarian harmony (Phase II). To promote community-led restoration activities.
Regreening Africa	EU	To reverse land degradation on 1 million ha and to restore ecosystems in eight countries (Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal and Somalia) and improve the resilience of 500,000 households across sub-Saharan Africa.
FLR Implementation Hub	Germany	To help countries accelerate forest landscape restoration via the FLR Implementation Hub which is being run by IUCN, WRI and WWF.

Table 3. Consideration of FLR principles in projects.

PRINCIPLE	ASSESSMENT OF STRENGTH OF APPLICATION (-/+ /++)
1. Focus on landscapes	+
2. Engage stakeholders and support participatory governance	-
3. Restore multiple functions for multiple benefits	++
4. Maintain and enhance natural ecosystems within landscapes	-
5. Tailor to the local context using a variety of approaches	-
6. Manage adaptively for long-term resilience	+

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

Given that FLR encompasses a large number of activities, quantifying investments in FLR proves to be difficult. A search on the online databases for the bilateral and multilateral donors under consideration for the terms ‘forest landscape restoration’ or ‘forest’ AND ‘landscape restoration’ yielded the results outlined in Figure 3. As noted earlier, this information is constrained by the information provided on the databases and by the accuracy of their search engines.

COUNTRIES OR MECHANISMS	NUMBER OF FLR PROJECTS	FINANCIAL AMOUNT	
		Total of projects (in EUR million and reported currency if relevant) incl. co-funding	Contribution of the entity alone (in EUR million and reported currency if relevant)
 FRANCE	None found although some may exist		
 GERMANY	7	543	521
 NORWAY	2*		14.3 (USD 15)
 USA	None found although some may exist		
 EU LIFE (2014-2020)	None found although some may exist		
 EU HORIZON 2020	2(8)**	42	41
 GCF	41(49)***	2,985 (USD 3,127)	1,109 (USD 1,162)
 GEF	14	352 (USD 369)	59 (USD 62)

* although 9 entries appeared in the database, they referred to different extensions of the same 2 projects. Search for the period 2015-2020

** 6 projects from the EC were removed because they were not considered relevant

*** 8 projects under the GCF were removed because they were not considered relevant

⬆ **Figure 3.** Number of projects found in databases and amount of funding for FLR (data from November 2021).



Fencing protects forests from overgrazing by Rusa deer, an invasive species in New Caledonia, thus facilitating passive restoration of endangered dry forest remnants (© P. Barrière / CEN)

THE WAY FORWARD

Funding needs for FLR are significant. While public donors should not be the sole source of funding, their role in supporting the restoration of forests is critical. The donors explored in this report are all major players in funding forests but not necessarily FLR. Yet four key themes that they fund transpire from this research as being associated with FLR: biodiversity; climate change; rural development and forestry. This reflects the three main disciplines (forestry, ecology and rural development) that have embraced FLR and the five constructs proposed in Mansourian (2018).

With the exception of Germany, donors only timidly refer to FLR, with the majority referring instead to the more commonly used international language of reforestation, afforestation (as per the UNFCCC language), ecological restoration (as per the CBD language) or the more generic term: 'restoration'. Having said that, the priorities inherent to FLR that relate to landscapes and both social and ecological dimensions can be found in many donors' approaches and priorities. For example, France's 'territorial approach' represents a landscape approach within which different land uses are included, in the same way that FLR aims for a landscape that achieves multiple benefits for multiple stakeholders. Equally, the US's 'sustainable landscapes' focus represents a collection of activities within a landscape that seek to accommodate both ecological and social priorities. The GEF's 'impact programmes' also represent a series of integrated activities within a larger scale to reach broader objectives of sustainability.

Looking to the future, we identify a need to: 1. better integrate FLR funding with other priorities; 2. substantially increase funding for FLR; and 3. improve complementarity between public and private funding.

OPPORTUNITIES TO BETTER INTEGRATE FLR INTO CURRENT FUNDING

As demonstrated in this report, FLR is associated with multiple government priorities, including climate change, rural development, biodiversity and forestry. All of these dimensions are inter-linked, and a broader landscape approach can help to address them in a more comprehensive manner, avoiding contradictory sector-based policies and projects.

Strategies to tackle food security and other rural development priorities can better integrate forests and particularly forest

restoration. Indeed, the US Global Food Strategy considers ecosystems more broadly recognising the linkages between ecosystem health and agricultural productivity. Taking a landscape approach with as an entry point food security, or climate, or forestry, can provide the opportunity for a more integrated approach to the relevant priority. This resonates with the upcoming Inter-governmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) assessment on "the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food and health (nexus assessment)". Similarly, strengthening forest restoration in biodiversity and climate policies can serve to ensure that more sustainable interventions are carried out. For example, combining both climate mitigation and adaptation, rather than merely focusing on mitigation is important when considering the role of forests (Stanturf *et al.*, 2015).

THE NEED TO INCREASE FUNDING FOR FLR

Forest landscape restoration requires a long term sustained effort, and significant results cannot be achieved in the typical donor cycle of 3-5 years. As countries are increasing their pledges to restore millions of hectares of forests, so should donor countries increase their pledges to finance these long term efforts. These increases should take place in both the amounts invested and the timeframes (minimum 10 years) over which they are committed. A rare example of long term funding for FLR took place in Tanzania with the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs funding three successive phases of an FLR initiative in the east Usambara mountains over a ten year period (Mansourian *et al.*, 2019).

THE POSSIBLE COMPLEMENTARY ROLE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDING

There are several sources of financing for FLR, both public and private. Each sector has a role to play:

- the public sector has a role and responsibility as concerns public goods such as many forests and the services that they provide; it provides substantial funding, for 3-4 year periods. It can also provide the capacity and flexibility to start a new project, in a new landscape, enabling investments in infrastructure and staff recruitment for example.

- the private sector can provide flexible funding and usually supports activities that are simpler (planting trees), have a communication potential or link to their business (e.g., ‘insetting’) and can show rapid field results (e.g., number of trees planted).

Public and private funding are complementary. Merging them to fund FLR may be optimal (Gitz *et al.*, 2020).

In many instances, public funding requires co-funding which can be provided by the private sector. While public funding tends to operate on short cycles (3-4 years), complementary private funding may help to either extend the duration of this funding or at least bridge funding between two public donor cycles. For example, in Madagascar, the FLR project launched by WWF in 2004 in Fandriana-Marolambo was initially funded by France’s FFEM for four years, but then benefitted from bridging funding from the Good Planet Foundation and Air France before receiving new funding from the Swedish government (Mansourian *et al.*, 2018).

More generally, limited consideration has been given to the different roles that the public and private sectors might play in funding FLR. While there are growing calls for private funding for FLR, in many instances, these may need to be facilitated or encouraged through longer term public funding or subsidies.



Fantasia/Adobe Stock

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PUBLIC FUNDING FOR FLR IN THE UN DECADE ON ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

Going forward, it is clear that forests play an essential role in public policies, from reducing deforestation, to addressing drivers of forest loss and through to restoration. Forests appear in all of the main environmental conventions and they have garnered more attention with the recognition of their role in the climate crisis. As a result, restoration is expected to continue to attract public funding. Some of the key priorities to ensure that public sector funding is directed at projects that do meet FLR-like standards include:

- promoting multiple objectives through forest restoration rather than focusing on narrow objectives such as carbon sequestration;
- improving monitoring of long term impacts so as to steer away from short-term efforts;
- seeking to build public-private coalitions to multiply impact in forest restoration given the scales of the challenge;
- improving cross-sectoral collaboration/integration to remove contradictory policies and enhance the efficiency and impact of public sector funding;
- improving cross-convention collaboration at the national level (e.g., among focal points) so that there is a harmonised approach to meeting global objectives associated with climate change, biodiversity and land degradation;
- re-directing a share of subsidies from sectors such as agriculture, rural development or energy towards FLR that provides multiple benefits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the above, six specific recommendations can be made for the future of public funding for FLR:

- **Recommendation 1:**
Public donors should re-frame some of their biodiversity, climate, forest or land use priorities around the broader and more encompassing FLR approach, recognising the role of FLR in meeting multiple objectives. Increasing support to such comprehensive efforts will lead to social and ecological benefits in line with FLR.
- **Recommendation 2:**
FLR projects that are funded by public donors should better integrate the needs of diverse stakeholder groups. As public goods, forests should be restored to meet the needs of and benefit a diversity of stakeholders from smallholders located in the landscape to the global community. However, the needs of those most dependent on forests should be prioritised.
- **Recommendation 3:**
Recognising the long-term nature of ecosystem restoration and FLR more specifically, public donors should enable long-term financing mechanisms for FLR. Public donors should recognise that the required diversity of interventions and long term commitments to successfully reach sustainability in a given landscape may be seen as a strength rather than a difficulty for FLR public funding efficiency.
- **Recommendation 4:**
Collaboration should be strengthened among public donors, across sectors and between public and private donors towards FLR so as to enhance the overall amount of funding available, but also to promote synergies (e.g., geographic priorities). There is an urgent need to scale up restoration and associated funding. Collaboration can help to improve efficiencies (in selecting projects and partners, in carrying out due diligence, in evaluating results etc.) and reduce duplicate or worse still, conflicting, funding allocations.
- **Recommendation 5:**
The public sector can give impetus to much needed guidance and leadership to better define and measure progress on FLR. Overall monitoring suffers from lack

of common definitions and measures. Public sector donors can set the example through improved datasets, better tools (including online databases) and more transparency.

- **Recommendation 6:** A share of subsidies that are directed at some of the sectors associated with the four themes we identified – climate change, biodiversity, rural development and forestry – could be re-directed to FLR. Public funding through subsidies, if applied to an integrated approach such as FLR, can be a valuable tool to both support cross-sectoral collaboration that is needed for FLR, and to reduce narrow and conflicting approaches resulting from current sectoral subsidies.



Local people's buy-in is critical and a strength of forest landscape restoration
(© J.B. Roelens)

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GEF: <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/database>

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